A HISTORY OF INDIA

PART I

THE PRE-MUSULMAN PERIOD

K. V. RANGASWAMI AIYANGAR, M.A.

A HISTORY OF INDIA

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ASOKA SENDING A BRANCH OF THE BO-TREE TO CEYLON.

From the rail at Sanchi. The royal figure alighting from the elephant to the right is believed to represent Asoka.

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PART I

THE PRE-MUSULMAN PERIOD

BY

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

NEW IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

8 HORNBY ROAD, BOMBAY

303 BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA

MADRAS, LONDON AND NEW YORK

1914

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THIS book is intended for use in the higher forms of Secondary or High Schools, and also for students who are studying a period of Indian History for Intermediate or B.A. Examinations.

In writing the book the aim of the author has been (1) To give in a simple and direct narrative an up-to-date account of the history of ancient India, political and social; to give the history of the people as well as of the kingdoms and dynasties; and to omit, as far as possible, unnecessary detail in names, dates, and facts, so as not to overload the memory with unessential matter. (2) To trace the influence, where possible, of environment generally, and of geographical conditions especially, on the course of history. (3) To trace the growth of movements and ideas, and to show the continuity of Indian history and the relation of cause and effect. (4) To give some prominence to the history of the South, and to the influence of the non-Aryan element in the history of Indian politics and culture. (5) To give character sketches, reflections, and histories of thought. (6) To recapitulate in suitable places the political narrative that has gone before, and to bring out the inner meaning and bearing on the life of the nation. (7) To draw conclusions in a non-controversial

way; and (8) to indicate the points of contact between Indian history and the history of foreign countries.

The chronological table gives the annals of culture as well as politics, and is not a mere list of leading dates.

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INTRODUCTION

Historical Geography of India

1. The lives of nations, as of men, are to a large extent moulded by their surroundings. It will therefore be useful to begin the study of Indian history by realizing some of those outstanding features of the Geography of India which have influenced it.

India a geographical unit.

2. In shape India is a three-cornered peninsula, resting on one side of a large irregular quadrilateral, which has the Himalayan double wall for its parallel side. The western and eastern sides of this four-sided figure are formed by the mountain ranges guarding the north-west and the north-east frontiers, while the two sides of the peninsula are washed by the ocean. India is thus surrounded by natural defences, which protect it and give to the whole of the vast tract contained between these limits a geographical unity which would otherwise be missing.

Its gateways.

3. These barriers are not, however, impassable. The mountain walls on the north, north-west, and north-east are pierced by many openings, through some of which access to the adjoining lands is possible, while the broad seas offer no bar to the approach of seafaring people. The high elevation of the Himalayan passes, as well as the barrenness of the lands to which they lead, has not made them the

gateways through which immigrants have found their way into India. The Hindu Kush passes offer similar difficulties. On the north-east dense trackless forests have made access to India through them almost impossible. On the other hand, the comparatively low elevation of the mountain passes on the north-east of India has, in spite of their ruggedness, sterility, and difficulty, and the dry and thirsty desert plateaux, made them the historic approaches through which successive hordes of incomers have found their way into India. And in quite modern times, with the rise and growth of the maritime spirit among European nations, India has been entered by their pioneers through the unprotected coasts of the south and south-west, as well as the mouths of the great deltaic streams of Bengal.

Its position in Asia.

4. The situation of India relatively to other countries is also noteworthy. It stands in the middle of the peninsular system of South Asia. Its northern and western provinces have thus had facilities of access to the Iranian and Central Asian uplands, Arabia, and the lands watered by the Euphrates and the Nile—the sites of some of the great empires of ancient and mediæval times.

India not a sea-power.

5. The inhabitants of countries with indented coasts (forming natural harbours) and adjacent island groups are naturally drawn to the sea and to a seafaring life. Such features are absent in India. Its massive wedge-like form is thrust into the ocean, and its coast-line is practically unbroken and harbourless. The estuaries of its great rivers are generally unfit for navigation, being shallow and silt-covered. Hence, throughout its long history, India has not given birth to any maritime power, while it has itself become, in modern times, the prize in the conflict of the seafaring nations of Europe.

6. Next to the mighty ramparts which guard it on

the north, north-west, and north-east, the parts of India which have been historically of the most importance are its fertile river plains. Of these the largest is the Indo-Gangetic plain, which stretches from the Indian Ocean to the Bay of Bengal, over seventeen hundred miles, and is watered by the three great Indian rivers and their affluents. The rainfall and the soil of both slopes of the Himalayas, as well as of a good part of the Central Indian highlands, are brought to and spread over this area by these rivers, their feeders, and branches. A vast flat stretch of tropical country, which if waterless would not sustain life, is thereby turned into the most fertile, densely peopled, and wealthy part of India. To these rivers North India owes everything. If we give a thought to what it would be if it had had no such rivers, we can easily understand the gratitude, love, and reverence with which countless generations have looked on them. This is specially so of the Ganges, whose grandeur and helpfulness have endeared it to the people, and naturally drawn and held the loving worship of generations who have seen in it a friendly divinity (*Gangá-máta*, "Mother Ganges").

Its great rivers and plains.

7. In hot countries water is considered the most essential requisite for the support of plant and animal life. Population tends, therefore, to converge in well-watered and to be sparse in arid tracts. A sluggish river, whose flow is unimpeded by rocks or cataracts, furnishes a cheap natural waterway. Trade and dominion generally follow the course of such a river, and a tendency is set up for the commercial and political union of the peoples inhabiting the country through which it flows. Capital towns and trading centres are formed along its banks. Conquerors, occupying important parts in its course (the head, the centre, or the mouth), find it easy to extend their rule over the rest of the area watered by it. We shall find

these truths are amply illustrated in Indian history, principally by the fortunes of the land watered by the Ganges and its affluents, and to a smaller extent by that of the basins of other deltaic rivers, like the Indus, the Godavari, and the Kaveri.

The Dakhan.

8. Hindustan is separated from the uplands of the Dakhan, which lie almost at the very centre of India, by a fivefold barrier formed by the troughs of the Narbada and the Tapti, the Vindhyan and the Satpura mountain walls, and the dense jungle lying to the south of the Central Provinces. This cleavage has resulted in a tendency to keep North Indian history apart from that of the Dakhan. The separation would have historically become permanent, if the defences had been more complete and effective. But the Vindhya and Satpura mountains are comparatively of low elevation, and rise gradually from the adjacent plains, while the Narbada and the Tapti are fordable in several places, and in later years the Vindhyan jungle ceased to be impassable. Hence great powers ruling over Hindustan have not found it hard to extend their dominion over the Dakhan, and to retain possession of it so long as they continued strong. Conversely, a great power rising in the Dakhan has also been able to swoop over North India and attempt its conquest, as was done by the Marathas. But otherwise the histories of the Dakhan and Hindustan had been uninfluenced by each other.

South India.

9. The plateau of the Dakhan is continued in the upland of Mysore, which forms its southern and most elevated part. Below it to the east and west lies an open country stretching to the sea, shut out from the Malabar coast by a high chain of mountains and intersected by the Eastern Ghats, which are less continuous and less elevated than the Western. The descent from the highlands of Mysore to the plains is more abrupt towards the west than

towards the south or the east. Hence Mysore has dominated historically the eastern and southern plains, more than the adjoining narrow strip of the west coast.

10. The Malabar coast lies nearer the centres of the great empires of ancient and mediæval times than the east coast. It would therefore be natural to expect foreign invasions to occur on the western rather than on the eastern coast. Historically, however, this has not been so. Invaders descending on the west coast have been stopped by formidable natural obstacles—the mountain wall of the Western Ghats and their extensions, extending in an almost unbroken line from the Cape Comorin to Surat, and by the inhospitable deserts of Rajputana and Sindh.

The coasts.

11. The climate of a country affects its productiveness, and thereby indirectly influences the character of its inhabitants. Tropical lands with damp atmosphere, where an unfailing source of water is available through seasonal rains (*e.g.* the monsoons) or the presence of rivers, channels, and fresh-water lakes, are very fertile and are able to support large teeming numbers. Hot, arid, and waterless tracts and lands exposed to great cold and snow are generally barren, and therefore sparsely peopled. But in the former, as nature is bountiful and does practically everything, human effort is discouraged, and the people grow up indolent and lacking in vigour and the power of endurance. This has been the case with the fertile river plains of India and monsoon-fed Malabar coast. On the other hand, an unpromising soil calls forth man's skill and vigour to correct or remedy the niggardliness of nature, and the people living in those surroundings become energetic, self-reliant, and able to sustain continued bodily strain. This has been prominently the case with Rajputana.

Climate.

12. The Indian Empire now includes Baluchistan and

Outlying provinces—Baluchistan and Burma.

Burma. Both these countries, as well as Afghanistan (which is now a separate kingdom) and Ceylon (now a separate Crown colony), may be regarded historically as the adjuncts or approaches to India. Of these, Baluchistan, now waterless and barren, appears, many hundreds of years ago, to have possessed a good rainfall, and to have been fertile and prosperous. The remains of ancient embankments, terraces, and great irrigation works, which are still to be seen in that waterless region, point to this. The lower course of the Indus also then lay amidst fertile and wooded lands, and its main channel flowed considerably to the east of its present course in the Great Salt Run. These and the existence of lost rivers (like the Saraswati) made the country leading to and from Baluchistan a fruitful and pleasant region. Communications with Ceylon, too, were then easier, as it was accessible at low water by dry land over the celebrated *Setu* ("Adam's" or Rama's Bridge). Burma was also accessible by the Arakan coast. These facts will explain how intercourse between these lands and India was kept up in early days, and how these countries occasionally received the overflow of the Indian population.

CHAPTER I

The People—Non-Aryans

1. We still know very little about the earliest inhabitants of India. Scholars who have made a careful study of the subject consider the population of India to be the result of the racial mingling which has gone on for ages. Physical characteristics peculiar to each of the three great families into which mankind is usually grouped, viz. the "white" or Caucasian, the "yellow" or Mongolian, and the "black" or Negro, are to be found in India, either in their purity or in different grades of fusion. Members of all these families are therefore held to have at some time or other peopled India.

Racial mixture in India.

2. Migrations into India in the remote past were probably neither sudden nor violent. Fresh immigrants would therefore be slowly absorbed by the existing population. In course of time the new surroundings and modes of life would also begin to affect the appearance and racial traits of these incomers, and the difference between them and the previous inhabitants would become obscure. A strong race would often impose on its weaker neighbours its language, customs, and manner of living; and thus, in course of time, the descendants of different races would be found speaking the same tongue or following the same customs. The disappearance of these racial landmarks would make the study of origins very difficult. In such cases accurate

Character of the earliest migrations into India.

descriptions are out of the question, and broad surmises are alone possible. This is the case especially with the Indian peoples.

Changes in the outlines of India.

3. Those who have made a study of changes in the surface of the earth tell us that many thousand years ago the appearance of India was very different from what it is now. It was then being changed into its present form. A stretch of land linked it with South Africa, and perhaps also with Australia. This land connection, after lasting many thousands of years, was afterwards broken, and it subsided beneath the ocean. India then assumed its present outlines.

The earliest inhabitants of India.

4. During this remote period India appears to have been inhabited. Artificial markings, which must have been made by men, have been found on trees buried under the matter thrown out by the long extinct volcanoes of the Dakhan.

5. Who these people were we do not know. It has been surmised that they belonged to the group now represented by the Andamanese, viz. a branch of the Negro family. As the physical traits peculiar to this family are met with in many parts of India, while no distinct Negro languages have been discovered in it, it has also been suggested that these were either natives of the country or the earliest arrivals in it, and that they were merged in later immigrants. Roughly chipped weapons of flint, as well as rude burial mounds and circles of unhewn stones which are to be found throughout the peninsula, are assigned to these people.

The "Dravidians."

6. Next to these, if not equal to them in antiquity, are the members of the widespread group now generally called "Dravidian." Some learned men consider these to be the original inhabitants of India. Others believe them to have come into India through the north-west and north-east frontiers,

or south through the submerged Indo-African tract. The question is a difficult one to settle, but it is not of very great importance. Some points about the Dravidians are, however, clear. They were once dominant all over India, as may be inferred from members of the group being now found from the Ganges to Ceylon, in varying degrees of purity of blood. Their earliest members spoke an old language which is now assigned to the family called the Munda, or (sometimes) the Kolarian. The relationship between this language and the original Dravidian language, the parent of the modern languages of South India, is not clear and well established. But those who spoke the Munda languages were as Dravidian in blood as those later members of the race who spoke the Dravidian parent-tongue from which all modern Dravidian languages are derived.

7. The Santals of Chota Nagpur in Bengal, and the Paniyans of Malabar, are held to approach most closely to the primitive or pure Dravidian type. The early Dravidians would therefore appear to have been a short, dark-skinned people, with black eyes, broad noses, and plentiful hair. All those who speak Dravidian languages at the present day do not possess these traits. This is, however, because the original type has in their cases become gradually modified by mixing with other races, like the Mongolians or the Indo-Europeans.

8. Members of the yellow or Mongolian family appear to have entered India later. Their original home lay in China, on the upper waters of the Yangtse and the Hoangho. Branches of this race entered Tibet and Indo-China, and some of these found their way into India over the Himalayas and the mountains of the north-east, where they are still most clearly seen. Centuries later, during historic times, tribes of the same race (*e.g.* the Huns) again entered India, but from the north-west,

The "Mongolian" immigrants.

and some of them got so far south as the Dakhan. A large Mongolian element was thus introduced into the Indian population, where it has remained for hundreds of years, mixed in varying proportions with the other races.

The "Aryans."

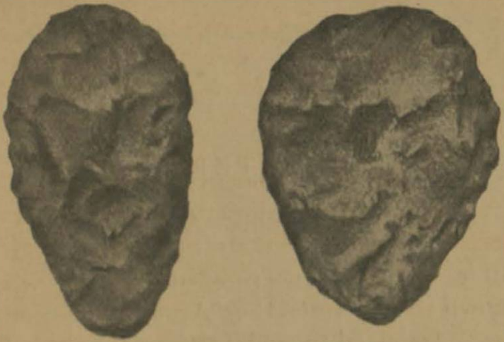
9. The next immigrants were the memorable people known in history as the Aryans. Before these invaders many of the backward aboriginal tribes retired into the mountains and forests, where their descendants still continue to follow their primitive customs. But the bulk of the old populations did not share their fate. The natural bulwarks of India made it difficult for invaders to move with their families, especially when they marched in small bodies. Many Aryans seem to have been in this plight, and had therefore to choose wives from the natives of the country. In this manner race barriers broke down, and a new Indo-Aryan people came into being, into whose body many of the older and cultivated tribes gradually became merged.

10. The Aryan invasion marks a turning-point in the history of India. The new-comers in course of time imposed their language, customs, and religion on the older inhabitants of the country, who thus became "Aryanized." The prevailing element in later Indian civilization became Aryan. But the Dravidian population was not uninfluential. Many of the Dravidian tribes with whom the Aryans came in touch had already attained to a large measure of civilization, and the two races had therefore much to learn of each other.

Primitive "Dravidian" culture.

11. During the ages preceding the Aryan immigration most of the Dravidian aborigines had passed through the earlier stages of civilization. Their most ancient members seem to have used polished flint weapons, *i.e.* belonged to the "new stone age." They appear to have also under-

stood the art of making rude, unglazed pottery. From using stone implements they took to using iron, which



Old Stone Implements.
(From the Breeks Collection in Madras Museum.)

they found in large quantities in the peninsula. Copper and bronze became known to them only much later.

12. A broad gap of time lies between the people of the iron age and the earliest cultivated Dravidians. The stage of culture attained by these is disclosed by a study of the pre-Aryan words in the Dravidian languages. Such a study shows that they knew agriculture and all the common arts of life, including cotton-weaving and dyeing; that they lived in small villages, and were ruled by petty chiefs; that they believed in a supreme power, to whom they built temples, but also worshipped with bloody sacrifices (often human) a host of evil spirits and "devils." They appear, further, to have had no hereditary priesthood, to have been able to count up to a hundred and calculate the year by the moon, to have used the ordinary metals (except tin and zinc), to have been able to build canoes and boats and even small ships, and to have delighted in love and war.

CHAPTER II

The People—Aryans

1. Upon a country thus peopled did the wonderful race known to history as the "Aryans" descend. They belonged to an illustrious family which has now spread over the entire world, and from which the ruling peoples of Europe as well as southern and western Asia are derived. From this circumstance this large group is generally called Indo-European. A section of this family which ultimately occupied Persia and India called itself Aryan, from an old word which denoted noble birth.

The "Indo-Europeans."

2. Scholars are not agreed as to the original dwelling-place of the Indo-Europeans. Recent researches point to the common borderland of Europe and Asia—the steppes of South Russia—as perhaps their oldest habitation. There they appear to have lived for ages leading the lives of a simple pastoral people, tending their flocks and sometimes taking to the cultivation of land.[1]

Their original home.

3. In course of time, however, either through changes in climate or natural increase in numbers rendering

[1] *Note.*—A learned scholar of Poona, Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, has tried to prove in two ingenious works that the original home of the *Vedic* Aryans lay in the Arctic regions, and that the Aryan civilization and parts of the Veda should be put many centuries before their usually accepted dates (third and second millenniums B.C.). His conclusions have not been generally accepted.

their home in the steppes too narrow for the whole people, branches of the family began to emigrate to other lands. One of them wandered westwards to Europe, and became the parent of the Greek, Latin, Keltic, and Teutonic nations. Another sought new homes in the east and south-east. The people called "Aryans" formed a section of this branch of the Indo-European family. They appear to have skirted the northern shores of the Caspian sea, and settled at first in or about the oasis of Khiva.

The Aryan wanderings.

4. After some time they began their wanderings again, impelled to do so either through the restlessness of nomads or increase in their own numbers and the pressure of other peoples from behind. Following the course of the Oxus and the Jaxartes, they reached the highlands about Khokand and Badakshan. Here, for some reason not known to us, they split into two bodies, one of which moved westwards and settled in Iran or Eastern Persia, while the other crossed the Hindukush range, probably by the western passes, and settled in the country now known as Eastern Afghanistan.

5. Some members of this body gradually advanced down the valley of the Kabul river (probably *en masse*, as contrasted with the later waves) and entered and settled in the Panjab—the forerunners of the further immigrations of the same race which lasted for some generations more. These settlements took place on the banks of the great rivers of the Panjab, which for a time barred their further progress, and which appeared to them to be a vast gathering of waters, like the sea. They therefore called it the *Sindhu* (literally, the stream), and their land became known as the land of the Sindhu. The Iranians (Persians) called the river and the country watered by it *Hendu*, and

The first Aryan immigrants into India.

from it the modern Persian name Hind takes its origin. The Greeks, who followed the Persians, called the river Indos, and the people *Indoi*. From this the modern name India is derived.

The second stream of Aryan immigration.

6. It is also now believed that after the first bands of Aryan invaders from the Kabul valley had settled with their families in the Panjab, a second but more compact body of the same people who had reached the headwaters of the Oxus and the high tableland of the Pamirs, forced probably by causes similar to those leading to the first migrations, entered India by the difficult routes in Gilgit and Chitral, and, skirting the base of the mountains, made their way into the plains of the Ganges and the Jumna. From the rough nature of the country through which they passed, it is inferred that they were not followed by their women and children, and that after settling in the Gangetic plain they took to themselves wives from the dusky aborigines of the country—the Dravidians. The descendants of these unions passed as Aryans, and to them much of the credit for the so-called "Aryan" progress is now assigned.

Early Aryan culture.

7. It was no rude or savage people which thus entered India. Even in their Russian home the Indo-Europeans had attained to a fair degree of culture. Words, the roots of which are common to all Indo-European languages, and which may therefore be considered their common possession, point to this. Even in those remote times the ancestors of the "Aryans" of Iran and India knew how to till the earth and rear cattle, to build houses, waggons, and boats, to make utensils and arms in copper and iron, to weave hemp, flax, and wool, and to erect citadels. They also knew the elementary numbers, and divided the year by the moon. During the long interval between their departure from the steppes and their arrival in India they did not remain passive and

unprogressive. This is clear from the high degree of civilization which they had reached at the time of their settlements in the Panjab.

8. We have a valuable record of the life of the early Indo-Aryans in the Vedas. Veda primarily means "knowledge" in general, but among the Indo-Aryans it denoted their *unwritten* sacred lore.[1] The oldest portions of these consisted of sayings and songs (*mantras*) composed by different poets or seers, which the Aryan race brought with it from its earlier homes as its best and most cherished possession into the plains of the Indus and the Ganges. In these songs the early Aryans praised and besought their gods, whose favour they tried to win by prayers, spells, and sacrifices, to give themselves and their flocks, which formed their wealth and mainstay in life, prosperity and secure abodes. Composed at various times and under different conditions, this great treasury of sayings and hymns is wanting in order, unity, and system. Learned men in later centuries made a selection of these (since many of the hymns which represented a long-forgotten condition of Aryan life had already become unintelligible), and divided and arranged them into four great collections (*Samhita*)—the Rig, the Sama, the Yajur, and the Atharva *samhitas*—usually known as the four Vedas.

The Vedas.

9. From the fact of the Vedas in their present form being only collections of existing songs, prayers, and spells, it follows that no particular Veda could as a whole be regarded as of earlier date than the others. Portions of the Rig Veda are, however, admittedly among the earliest. The Sama Veda is practically a song-book of the priests, and contains for the most part hymns of the Rig Veda subjected to certain musical changes rendering them fit for chanting.

[1] Hence the name *Sruti* ("what is *heard*"), applied to the Vedas as a whole.

The Yajur Veda contains for the most part the verses to be recited at sacrifices, as well as a number of formulas and phrases explaining the nature and object of various rituals and ceremonies. It therefore evidently belongs to a period when the priests had gained an ascendancy over the other classes. The Atharva Veda mainly consists of prayers and incantations. It contains several old formulas, whose agreement with old spells in use among other Indo-European races show them to be among the earliest possessions of the Aryan peoples. But the greater part of it consists of matter which is held to be of later origin than even the Yajur Veda. Hence we have to depend mostly on the Rig Veda for information regarding the life of the early Aryan settlers in India.

The early Aryan settlements in India.

10. The names of the rivers mentioned in the Rig Veda furnish definite information regarding the earliest Aryan abodes in India. The chief settlements appear to have been on the Indus, its tributaries (these were called the seven rivers, *sapta sindhava*), and the river Saraswati. Enterprising settlers had pushed their way south beyond the point of the union of the Indus and its tributaries, but the main body did not follow them. The Satlej long formed their eastern frontier, though occasionally adventurous settlers moved across to the plains of the Jumna and the Ganges, which are only rarely mentioned. The Aryans knew of the emptying of the Indus into the Indian Ocean, and the name given by them to the south, *Dakshina* (*i.e.* land to the right), points to a sufficient advance having been made down the course of the Indus.

The life of the early Aryan settlers.

11. The Aryan colonists lived in houses which were often spacious and well built. Dwellings were grouped together in villages, fenced and often enclosed by earthworks and ditches as a protection against the attacks of wild beasts

and enemies. The whole body of Aryan colonies did not obey one ruler. They were governed by a number of princes, who often combined to fight not only the aborigines—common enemies—but also one another.

12. The unit of the state was the family, at the head of which stood the father as lord of the house. Descent was reckoned in the male line. The eldest male of the family was its head and ruler. Women occupied an honourable place in the household, and some of the prettiest songs in the Rig Veda are those welcoming the newly wedded bride into the family circle. An Aryan householder usually married only one wife. Marriage was regarded as a union rendered holy by the birth of sons. The importance attached to the purity of the marriage tie is shown by the hatred expressed in the songs towards unchastity and insult to defenceless women. Occasionally, as in all very old communities, the wife was allowed to follow her husband in death, but this was not usual, and widows were allowed to remarry.

13. The government of the Aryan state was naturally an imitation of the Aryan household. The king was leader of the people in war, and his position was in many instances hereditary. Sometimes, however, he was elected, while at others several members of a royal house exercised their powers in common. In peace the king was the judge of his people, who made voluntary contributions for his support. In war he held the chief command, and himself performed the sacrifices offered to the gods to ensure victory to the tribe. In later times this function was delegated to the priests, and from this substitution probably arose the claims to supremacy put forth in later times by the priestly class (the *Brahmans*).

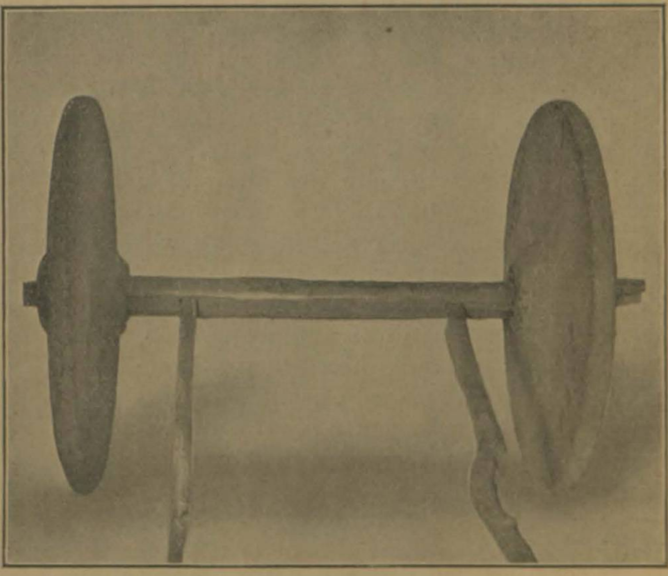
Their government.

14. The king was, however, nowhere absolute. His power was limited and controlled by the assemblies of the people formed on the basis of the tribe, the district,

and the nation. Pretenders to thrones sometimes strove to make their claims good with the help of armed retainers, and even offered violence to whole popular assemblies.

The Aryans in war.

15. Heroes of experience and renown led the adventurous forth to wrest lands and goods from the aborigines (*dasyu*), who were of a different *colour*, followed different customs, and above all worshipped other gods. The blessings of the gods were therefore sought with confidence for the success of the Aryan arms. The soldiers fought in



Ancient Stone Cart from Madras Museum.
(Type of Vedic chariot ?)

close lines, protected by shields, brazen coats of mail and helmets, and armed with bows and swords, spears and axes, and lances and slings. Kings and the wealthy fought in chariots drawn by horses. Victories were

celebrated with the beat of drums and blare of trumpets, sacrifices, and by songs of minstrels and priests, who followed the kings and received from them gifts of cows, chariots, robes, slaves, and bars of gold.

16. Wars often disturbed the life of the Vedic period. Individual tribes, Aryan and non-Aryan, oppressed and drove each other from their respective homes. Factions and pretenders strove to upset the peace of the land. Ambitious and warlike kings attempted to make themselves supreme over their neighbours, and alliances of clans and princes were formed to resist them. Such a king was the renowned warrior Sudas, head of the Tritsu tribe. He overcame a coalition of ten kings, and broke the strength of other powerful clans, like the Purus and the Bharatas. Many other such wars are also mentioned. In the intervals of peace, the Aryan nobles kept themselves in training by their chariot races.

Their occupations.

17. Cattle rearing was from the earliest times the chief means of Aryan subsistence, and next to it came agriculture. Cows were particularly esteemed as furnishing milk and butter, "the favourite food of gods and men." The terms of friendly intimacy on which the Aryans lived with their flocks are indicated by the common names given to the daughter and milkmaid (*duhitar*), the queen and the buffalo-cow (*mahishi*), the king and the cowherd (*gopa*), and the assembly-hall and the cowstall (*gostha*). An Aryan word for war (*ga-vishti*) signifies the desire for cows, and it points to the popularity of cattle-lifting. Wheat, barley, beans, and sesame were sown. The grain was harvested, threshed, winnowed, and ground in mills to be made into bread. Hunting and fishing were also practised. But the chief food of the people consisted of bread, milk, butter, vegetables, and fruits. Cooked *meat* was eaten, but only rarely, at family gatherings and great feasts.

18. Among other occupations those of the woodworker

(who then, as now in India, was a carpenter, wheelright, and joiner in one), the tanner, the armourer, the smiths that worked in the various metals, and the potter are mentioned. Money was not in use, but a person's wealth was calculated in cattle. Trade was merely barter. Women plaited mats, and spun and wove their own garments as well as the clothing for the men.

Dark features of early Aryan life.

19. Some of the dark features of a rude age as well as a number of the vices of a civilized society were also present. The exposure of children and of old people seem to have been practised at the early stages. People usually drank more than they ate, and drank heavily. *Surá*, a fermented drink prepared from barley, was the usual drink, and during sacrifices people got intoxicated on the juice of the moon-plant (*soma*), which was believed to give its drinker both nourishment and strength. Gambling was a common vice, and some men gambled away not only all their possessions, but their own persons as well. Theft and robbery were practised in the dusk and the dark. Criminals and unworthy men existed and had to be expelled from the community. Persons accused of crimes were put on their oath, and in cases of doubt the judgment of the gods was sought in ordeals of various kinds.

Aryan progress in the arts.

20. In arts and sciences much progress was not made. Writing was unknown, and the sacred hymns were preserved in the memory of priests and sacrificers. The knowledge of numbers and calculations was rudimentary. The principal stars and planets were known, but the months were divided by the moon. Sickness was regarded as due to the displeasure of the gods, but the cure of diseases was attempted by medicine-men with spells and healing herbs. In poetry alone is much advance evident, and this was largely the result of its alliance with religion.

CHAPTER III

The Aryans in Hindustan

SECTION I

THE VEDIC AGE

Early Aryan religious conceptions.

1. IN the Rig Veda we find pictured every stage in the growth of the Aryan religion from the lowest to the highest. In its oldest hymns, a simple-minded folk look with wonder and awe at the ordinary phenomena of nature, and attribute them to divine, or at least superhuman, agency. The sun, the moon, the dawn, lightning, the domestic fire, the storm, and the wind are personified and worshipped. *Surya* becomes the god of day, who by his regular appearance dispels darkness and its evil spirits and overlooks all human actions. The dawn (*Ushas*) is a beautiful maiden. *Rudra* and the *Maruts* are the gods of the howling storm. *Agni* is the friendly god of fire. *Indra* is the god of rain, who by his thunder pierces the dark clouds and releases the confined waters. Others similarly are recognized in daylight and the rays heralding its approach, the wind (*Vayu*), and the intoxicating moon-plant (*Soma*).

2. Worshippers try to obtain the favour and help of these gods and avert their displeasure by the recital of spells and by the performance of sacrifices. The gods are believed to draw renewed strength and vigour

from the offerings made at these sacrifices, and in return for them take a lively and friendly interest in the sacrificers. The Aryans are proud of their bright (*deva*, literally "the shining one") gods, and seek their assistance against their enemies with the confident hope that their prayers would be heard.

3. When good persons die their spirits find abode with Yama, the judge of the dead, and dwell with him in light and righteousness. They bring their pious descendants prosperity, and guard them through life. The impious and the sinful they punish a hundred-fold. The souls of evildoers are shut out after death from the companionship of these good spirits, and are cast into hopeless darkness.

4. Such were the simple religious conceptions of the early Aryans. In course of time people outgrew these ideas, and began to ponder deeply over religious questions. The result of these mental strivings is seen in the hymns glorifying a particular god at a time to the exclusion of the others, investing him for the moment with the attributes of all the rest. New gods clothed in colourless moral qualities also arose. Such was Varuna, the god of the firmament, who is described as the creator of all things, and as looking from his lofty seat in the sky on all that happens on earth. And such also was Yama, the righteous judge of the dead. These conceptions led the way to the idea of a single deity. Traces of this are found in the later portions of the Vedas.

Their growth.

5. While these changes in religious ideas were taking place the Aryans had advanced beyond the Sarasvati and occupied the plain of the Ganges. Altered physical conditions brought about a corresponding change in the modes of conquest and settlement. The Gangetic plain was the stronghold of the older population. The Aryan invasions of this tract had therefore to be attempted in

Aryan settlement on the Ganges.

large masses, so as to make attack or defence successful. Large communities took the place of the old Aryan tribes, and the old tribal heads were replaced by powerful leaders of national levies.

On such leaders devolved the burden of conquest and settlement, of protecting the newly conquered territory from their own kinsmen as well as the unsubdued aborigines, of preventing intestine factions and the rebellions of the conquered population, and of organizing and governing the new territory. With their responsibilities increased their power. Powerful monarchies were thus formed in the place of the old tribal chiefships.

Rise of powerful kings.

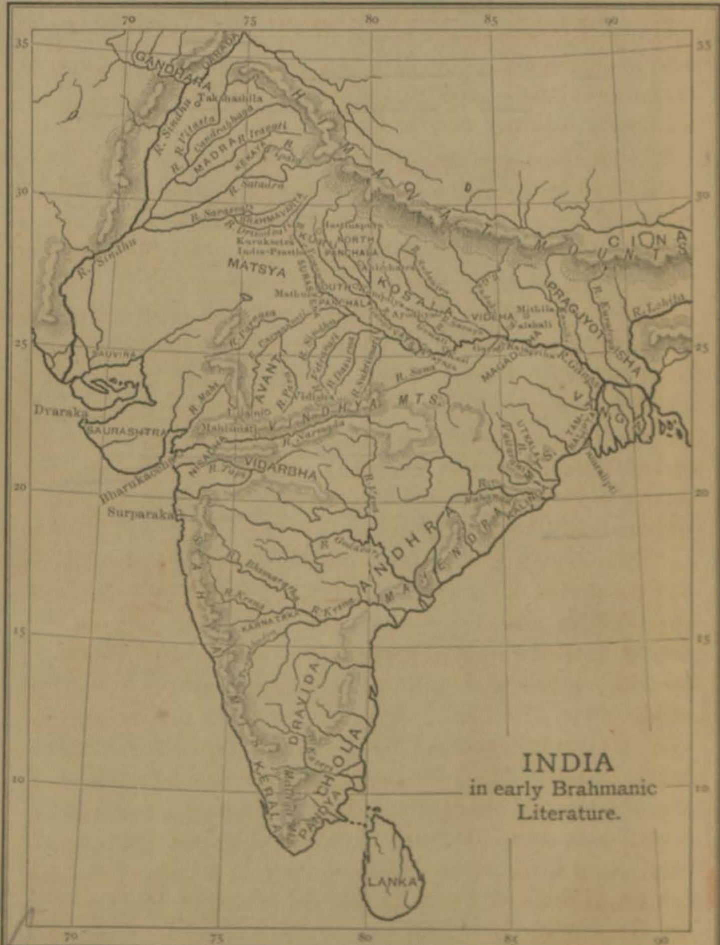
6. The *Bharatas*, the old enemies of King Sudas, under kings belonging to the tribe of *Kurus*, founded a kingdom near the site of modern Delhi. The *Panchalas* occupied the land to the north of the Bharata settlements, on the headwaters of the Jumna and the Ganges. Further to the east, but to the north of the Ganges, the *Kosalas* ruled on the Barayú. To their east, in Tirhut, settled the *Videhas*. To the west of the Jumna dwelt the *Matsyas*, and to their south the *Surasenas*. Below the confluence of the Jumna and the Ganges settled the *Kasis*. The *Angas* and the *Magadhas* came much later, and ruled over the lands to the east and south-east of the *Kasi* settlements.

Chief Aryan tribes.

7. In the process of forming these kingdoms the native population was not destroyed. It was slowly absorbed. As we have already seen, the second stream of Aryan migration (through Gilgit and Chitral) had united readily with the aboriginal element. Some of the new conquerors, *e.g.* the Kurus (who had united with the Bharatas, and who appear to have practised polyandry), were only half Aryan in blood. Still, the old pride of an Aryan lineage was kept up, and made them unwilling to

Treatment of the older inhabitants.

admit the union that was actually taking place. Purity of blood and of colour (*varna*) was still made much of.



INDIA in early Brahmanic Literature.

8. Meanwhile, the new conquests brought into existence, along with warlike kings, a nobility skilled in the

use of arms. On them the brunt of the fighting lay. They stood round the kings, and obtained as the reward of their prowess a large share of the booty as well as the best land in the newly conquered territories. Proud of their social eminence, they set up as a separate class, and styled themselves *Rajanyas* (*i.e.* the princely) and *Kshatriyas* (*i.e.* the powerful).

Rise of a nobility.

9. So also rose a priestly class. The belief that the gods were propitiated by sacrifice led to an increase in the number and splendour of sacrifices and the complexity of sacrificial ritual. The sacred hymns had also reached a goodly number, and some of them had even become unintelligible to the layman. All this furnished enough work for a separate class. Such a body arose in the descendants of the old minstrel-priests, who performed the sacrifices on behalf of the early Aryan princes, and lauded their victories in triumphal songs. These, as having to do with divine knowledge, called themselves Brahmanas.

And a priesthood.

10. Thus, owing to natural causes, Indo-Aryan society became divided into three classes—the warriors (*rajanyas*), the priests (*brahmanas*), and the body of husbandmen and traders (*Vaisyas*). In India such distinctions tended to become hereditary. The pride of each class in its pre-eminence made it unwilling to allow the admission of outsiders within its pale. Long-standing rules excluding strangers from the family circle were adopted to guard the rights of the new classes from the intrusion of outsiders. Thus, partaking of the food cooked at the sacred fire marked in the old Aryan home the unity of the family, and consequently strangers were excluded from it. Again, the sacred domestic fire was tended by husband and wife together, who had to be of equal birth. These rules were now interpreted as limiting the circle within

Growth of caste.

which persons might eat with one another, or within which they might marry, to the class to which they belonged. The enforcement of these rules widened the rift which had sprung up between the three classes. They, in turn, looked down upon the unabsorbed remnant of the aboriginal population as inferior men, and to contrast their own lighter colour (*varna*) with the darker complexion of this remnant. The latter were, therefore, grouped into a fourth class, and the whole community, Aryan and non-Aryan, came to be divided roughly into four great self-sufficing orders or castes separated from one another by the absence of freedom to marry or eat outside the order.

Note to Chapter III., Section I

This probably was the manner in which caste arose in India. The question of caste origins is a very difficult one, and from its nature no correct or final solution to it is possible. In later times restrictions on intermarriage and inter-dining were imposed so liberally in the case of small groups as to create a number of small castes. The formation of new castes is not even now over. Castes have been formed historically on the basis of tribes (*e.g.* the Jats), professions or occupations (*e.g. chamars*, or leather-workers), and religious sects (*e.g.* Lingayats). They have also arisen from interbreeding (as among the Mundas), changes in custom (as through the cessation of the practices of widow-marriage or meat-eating), and migrations (*e.g.* the Nambudri Brahmans of Malabar).

Caste origins.

The strife for precedence gave rise to several traditional accounts of the origin of castes, which exalted particular castes at the expense of the rest. The most famous of such theories is found in a late hymn of the Rig Veda, which states that Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras were brought forth respectively from the mouth, arms, thighs, and feet of the Creator.

Traditional accounts,

The evidence of old Brahman and Buddhist books is, however, clear on two points: viz. that much freedom still existed as late as the sixth century B.C. in changing one's occupations and in marrying outside one's caste, and that the claims for precedence between Kshatriyas and Brahmans were not settled finally even at that period.

and the evidence of ancient books.

Influence of caste: good features.

Caste has played a great but silent part in Indian history. In the earliest ages its divisions agreed roughly with the natural distribution of blood, calling, and talent. It thus saved much waste that would otherwise have occurred through carelessness in the choice of occupations. Professional skill became heritable, and improved with every generation. The limits of a caste did not coincide with those of a district or a kingdom. Its members became conscious of their unity, fostered a common spirit, and rendered much good service to one another. Society was made independent of political changes. The admission of the rude non-Aryan tribes within the pale of the Aryan social system prevented grave racial struggles, while their relegation to the lowest class in the scheme saved the Indo-Aryan element from being overwhelmed by the superior numbers of the aborigines.

Bad features.

In course, however, many evils also began to result from the system. Castes were needlessly multiplied, and their rules made rigorous. Men found themselves tied down to the occupations of their forefathers, and unable to adopt callings for which they felt that they possessed natural aptitude. Genius and the power of initiative gradually tended to disappear. Despondency crept over the lower castes, while unhealthy elation and pride filled the higher. Caste rivalries and feuds began to appear. Society became divided by ill-will and strife, and unable to effect combinations in the face of common perils.

SECTION II

The Age of the Brahmanas and the Upanishads

The later Vedic hymns and the Brahmanas.

11. The division of the people into orders appears to have taken place about the period when the latest additions to the Vedic hymns were made (about 1000 B.C.). The ancient dialect in which most of the songs were composed was now no longer spoken. The significance of many old rites had also become obscure. The hymns themselves had reached an unwieldy number. The priestly class overcame these difficulties. They reduced the hymns to their present form, and arranged them

as the four Vedas. They further supplemented them by a new series of works, named "Brahmanas," containing a jumble of doctrines, rules of sacrificial ritual, mythological stories, and explanations of knotty points in the Vedic text.

Growing importance of sacrifices and ritual.

12. These new works did not materially change the old Vedic religion. The ancient gods were still held up for adoration, but they tended in the stories to approach nearer their form in the later Hindu pantheon. The real change that took place was in the spirit rather than the substance of the old religion. Mystic importance was attached to sacrifices and ritual. The life of the householder was hemmed in by a series of acts he had ordinarily to perform, and which constituted his duty in a large sense (*dharma*). Sacrifices were elaborated a good deal, and became complex, splendid, and costly. Their number and variety also increased. In many cases living victims (*paçu*) were now demanded.

Conditions favouring priestly ascendancy,

13. The upkeep of this vast body of knowledge required a separate order of priests as well as close and systematic study. Hence the various rules regarding the sacrifices and the conduct of the orders in religious and secular life were strung together in the form of aphorisms (*Sútra*) for easy remembrance. The life of the Brahman was also divided into stages (*ásrama*), so arranged as to enable him to fulfil his duty (*dharma*) in life. Thus in youth he had to study the sacred books (*brahmacharyá*), in manhood he could marry and lead the life of a householder (*grhastha*), while in old age he had to devote himself to religious meditation, first as a recluse (*vánaprastha*) and then as a wandering mendicant (*sanyásin*).

14. Schools (*parishad*) for teaching all this complex knowledge arose throughout the land, and were generally endowed by royal patrons. Pious kings also vied

with one another in holding assemblies of divines (*brahmodaya*), in which grave religious problems were discussed.

15. The change in the seat of Aryan life, as well as the altered conditions of it, promoted religious thought. The whole of the Gangetic plain was now under Indo-Aryan occupation, and streams of colonists had even settled in Bandelkhand (*Chedi*), Malwa (*Nishada*), and the Berars (*Vidarbha*). The rise of the priestly and warrior classes had exempted the bulk of the community from much of their former work, especially military service, and permitted their devoting themselves entirely to their everyday business. The wealth of the country increased, and, as a consequence of it, the power and splendour of the kings. Fighting was now confined to the frontiers, and peace generally reigned within the kingdoms. The priestly class, engrossed in its own pursuits, was content to allow the warriors to occupy the chief positions in the State so long as outward reverence and liberality were shown to Brahmans. These settled conditions set the thoughtful element in the community free to ponder over profound questions of religion and morals. The new thought was spread by the institutions of the first and last stages (*Asrama*) of the Brahman's life (*brahmacharya* and *sanyasa*), which necessitated moving about in search of knowledge.

and religious speculation.

16. A period of religious and moral doubts and speculations, lasting for some generations (till *c.* B.C. 500), set in. Interesting pictures of the mental stir of this epoch are preserved in the last part of the Vedic canon, viz. the *Upanishads* (literally, "the secret session" or doctrine), as well as the great Indian epics (the *Rámáyana* and the *Mahábhárata*) and the early Jain and Buddhist sacred books. From these we learn that during this epoch such subtle problems as the nature of the soul, the

Epoch of mental stir.

existence of a Supreme Power, the government of the universe by natural laws, the meaning of Death, the probability of life after death, and the causes of pain and suffering in the world, engaged the attention of the thoughtful. The attempts to solve these problems resulted in the foundation of many new sects and schools of philosophy (*darsana*) by teachers of strong or attractive personality, some of whom appear to have belonged to the Kshatriya caste.

17. The chief results of this new-born spirit of reflection were twofold: viz. a tendency to look at the moral rather than physical side of things, and a habit of analysis. Thus, the belief gained ground that the value of a sacrifice consisted in the spirit in which it was done rather than in the exact form it took. A righteous life came to be regarded as more desirable than a multitude of sacrifices. Philosophical questions were also discussed without reference to mythology and caste.

Its results.

18. Some new theories now made their appearance, which are notable as containing the framework of much of the later Indian thought. One of these was the old idea (found in many half-civilized tribes) that the soul after death enters into new bodies; another was the allied conception that the soul never dies, but passes from one existence into another in a practically unending cycle of births and deaths. A third was the belief that no act or deed is lost, and that all actions, good or bad, bear their proper fruit, helping their authors up or down the scale of transmigration. The miseries of the soul were believed to be prolonged over an endless and weary series of existences.

19. It became the chief recognized object of most of the philosophical schools and religious sects of this period to discover some means of delivering the human soul from this unending pilgrimage. Many solutions of the riddle were apparently offered at the time, but of

these no correct or connected record exists. There are, however, reasons to think that some of the principal systems of Indian philosophy (*e.g.* the *Sámkhya*, the *Púrvamímámsa*, the *Yóga*, and the *Vedánta*) had their rise in such attempts; that the teachings ascribed to the Yádava prince, Krishna, the son of *Dévakí*, in the *Bhagavad-Gítá* ("the Lord's Song"), were those of an actual historical teacher of the period, who founded a sect, and who in later times came to be identified with an incarnation of the deity; and that the Jain and Buddhist religions were the latest outcome of this intellectual movement, and owed much of their popularity to the confident manner in which they offered solutions to the problem of transmigration.

Rise of new philosophical and religious systems.

20. The mental stir which thus prepared the ground for Buddhism apparently occupied some centuries (from B.C. 1000 to B.C. 500). During this period the leadership of the Brahman class in matters of religion resulted in considerable additions to literature and knowledge. This progress was naturally most pronounced in those branches which were nearly related to the Brahmanic religion. The study of Vedic texts brought into existence the science of grammar (*Vyakarna*) in its different branches, phonetics (*siksha*), metre (*chhandas*), and etymology (*nirukta*). Geometry grew from the rules for the erection of sacrificial altars. The discovery of the right moment for the performance of sacrifices encouraged the study of astronomy (*jyótisha*). The beginnings of civil law were made in the attempts to work out and classify the details of the life of a man in his relations to the gods (through sacrifices), to the State, and to his family. In accordance with the practical aims of the epoch, which confined the progress of knowledge to subjects allied to the religion of the country, no attempt was made to secure literary grace

Brahman progress.

or beauty in the manuals which set forth the results of this advance. They were all expressed in the form of dry maxims (*sutra*), to enable them to be easily learned off by rote.

Sanskrit and the Prakrits.

21. A number of dialects had arisen from the old Vedic speech of the Panjab, and these formed the vernaculars of Northern India. But among them the dialect of the Gangetic doab, the "Middle-land" (*madhyadésa*) of the Indo-Aryans, assumed during this epoch a position of pre-eminence, as it represented the most populous, the wealthiest, the most influential, and the most central area in Hindustan. It was accordingly adopted as the standard literary tongue by the Brahmans, who called it *Samskrita* (Sanskrit), the refined speech, in contrast to the unpolished sister Indo-Aryan vernaculars, which were styled Prákrits (from *Prakrita*, meaning "natural"). In course of time, through the labours of a succession of grammarians (the most notable of them was Panini, who lived about the middle of the fourth century B.C.), Sanskrit became fixed, and came to be understood only by the learned classes of the community, while the Prakrits continued to be spoken as before by the common people. Sanskrit, however, continued to be the literary language of the Brahmans even after it had ceased to be generally understood.

Ancient songs and legends.

22. The dryness of the literature of the period was, however, relieved by various poems, composed on the basis of the songs of the ancient minstrels, recounting the joys and sorrows in love and war, of the heroes and heroines of an earlier age. The toils and adventures of the early Aryans in settling in a new land, and their struggles with the aborigines, had furnished inspiring subjects of songs to the Vedic minstrels, and many of their triumphal songs are preserved in the Vedic hymns. The external processes of nature had been humanized by the Vedic

seers, and represented poetically as the conflicts of gods and demons. The imagination of the ministrels of a later age played freely with these legends, and out of them evolved heroic sagas, which were listened to with rapture wherever they were sung, as much under the village tree as in great cities and the courts of kings.

23. Many of these legends are now enshrined within the vast framework of two wonderful epic poems—the Ramayana (attributed to the poet Valmiki) and the Mahabharata (reputed to be the work of the sage Vyasa)—the historical core of which appears to have been composed during the early days of this epoch, and not later than the tenth century B.C.

The great epics,

24. Learned men nowadays recognize in the Ramayana either a poetical version of certain old Vedic myths, or a glorified account of the conquest of South India by the Aryans. Similarly they discover in the central theme of the Mahabharata a famous historical war between the two old Indo-Aryan tribes, the Kurus and the Panchalas, and their allies, which ended with the destruction of the former in the great battlefield of Kurukshetra (near modern Thanesar).

the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

25. To the student of Indian history, however, these poems have a value quite irrespective of the history or the allegory they contain. They represent the noblest efforts of creative poetic genius on Indian soil. For centuries their stories have been believed as wholly and literally true by the mass of the Indian people, and have supplied to successive generations of Indian men and women their ideals of life. For generations Indians have turned in sorrow, in joy, and in daily toil to these noble poems for solace and inspiration. In this sense they have become national possessions, keeping alive through ages of disunion, strife, and misery the idea of a common origin and of common traditions.

Their influence.

CHAPTER IV

The Epoch of New Religions—Jainism and Buddhism

1. THE intellectual movements described in the last chapter continued for some generations. About the end of the seventh century B.C. and the beginning of the sixth, they culminated in the foundation of a large number of religious sects. Each of them strove to answer in its own way the problem of finding an escape from the misery of an endless chain of births and deaths by which the human soul was believed to be bound. Most of the new bodies were united in an ardent sense of the miseries of life, and in desiring in the future not so much an existence of pleasure as a condition of painlessness. Some sects went so far as to hanker after the extinction of the soul, or at least of the feeling of self as the sole means of bringing to an end the miseries of transmigration.

New religious sects.

2. Fervent men and women were much impressed by the sight of every kind of human distress and suffering around them, in what they believed to be a fleeting stage of existence, and by the unequal distribution of health, riches, and happiness in life. A widespread feeling of despondency took the place of the cheerful religious outlook of the old Vedic times. Those who could do so, withdrew from the world, and in the seclusion of forests and

Conditions favouring their rise.

hills practised austerities. The life of a monk came to be much sought after, and the non-Brahman castes felt it a great hardship that the ascetic life was not, according to the current usage, open to their members.

3. Some of the new sects attempted to obtain deliverance in their own manner, and not by following the ritual or the dogma prescribed by the Brahmanic religion. Their faith in the old order had been undermined by the growing exclusiveness of the priestly class, which sought to confine to its own members, not only the sacred knowledge, but even the practice of retirement from the world, followed by an ascetic life, which was coming more and more to be regarded as a necessary first step in the freeing of the soul from misery. In this sense they were opposed to the current "Brahmanism," and were heretical in tendency.

Their opposition to Brahmanism.

4. The period saw the birth of many such reforming sects. Of these, however, two only are important historically, as they alone proved enduring and influential. These were Jainism and Buddhism. The others met the usual fate of small sects, and either died out naturally or sank into obscurity when their novelty wore off, and their followers became converts to other sects.

5. Of the two movements named above, Jainism is the older. Its reputed founder, Vardhamana, usually known by his later spiritual title Mahavira, was born about 599 B.C. He was the second son of a Kshatriya baron named Siddártha, who lived in a suburb of the wealthy city of Vaisáli, the capital of Vidéha. He appears to have been highly connected. His mother's brother Chetaka was a member of the governing body of the powerful oligarchy of Vaisáli. The ruling family of Magadha was also nearly related to him through his cousin Chellana, the wife of King Bimbisára and the mother

Jainism. Its founder Vardhamana Mahavira.

of his famous successor Ajátasatru. He belonged, thus, to an influential aristocracy.

6. Vardhamana's family were the members of a sect founded some generations previously by Parsvanátha. At the age of thirty, after the death of his parents, he renounced the world and became a member of the order of monks founded by that teacher. After about two years he left the order, as he was dissatisfied with its exclusiveness, men of noble blood only being eligible for admission into it. He discarded about this time his clothes, as a sign of breaking finally with the world. He thus became a *Nirgrantha, i.e.* one who has broken through all social ties. For more than ten years he wandered about the country, now known as Behar, trying to gain followers. When he was about forty-two years of age he claimed to have attained to the highest knowledge. In token of his spiritual victory he called himself *Mahávíra* ("the great hero"), *Jina* ("the conqueror"), and *Kèvalin* ("the all-knowing"), and began a long ministry of nearly thirty years. During it he wandered through Magadha (Behar), Vidéha (Tirhut), and Kosala (Oudh), gaining many followers, and organizing them. In virtue of his noble birth, he appears to have gained a large following of Kshatriyas, and legends are told of his intercourse with Bimbisára and his son Ajátasatru. After gaining many adherents, he is said to have died, at the age of seventy-two, at Paya (in the Patna district) about 527 B.C.

His teaching.

7. The chief feature of Mahavira's teaching was his declaration that membership within his fold, and the consequent salvation, were open to all persons alike, the Aryan, the low-born *Sudra*, and even the despised alien, the *Mlechcha*. The highest goal of life was the attainment of *Moksha*, or freedom from the round of birth and death. This goal could be reached by any one who firmly believed

in the Jina and his teachings, who led an austere life of virtue, free from passion and active part in and concern for worldly affairs, and who abstained from all sinful thoughts and actions, including intentional harm by word or deed to any living being. Those who could not retire from the world and its business, but still believed in the Jina and practised a life of virtuous self-restraint, could indeed not attain this highest goal, but would go a long way towards it.

8. The body of Jains was thus divided by Mahavira into two classes, the monks and the lay-followers (*Sravakas*, or "hearers"). The admission of lay brethren along with the ascetic to a fair share in the Jain system ensured harmony between the two sections, and the support of the monks by the congregation at large.

His system.

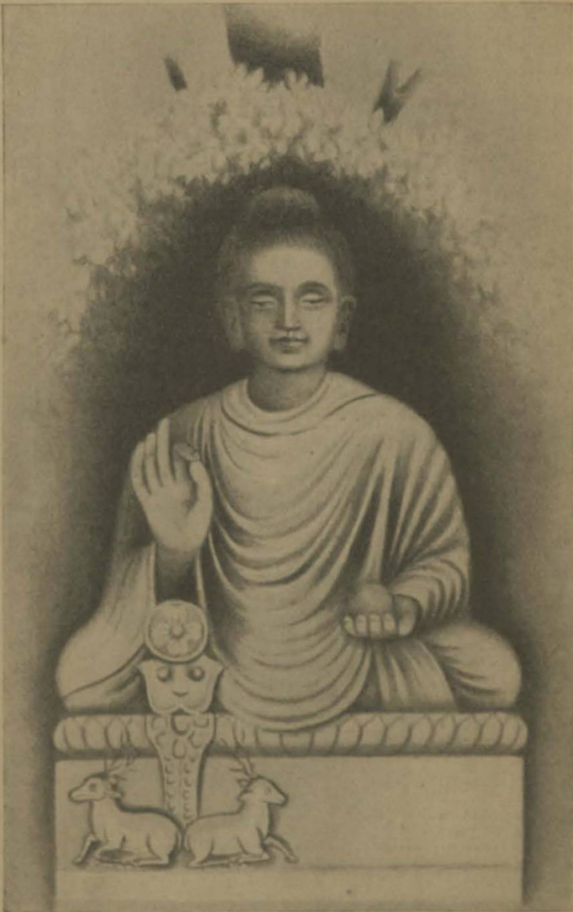
9. In spite of the opposition of its tenets to the principles of Brahmanism, Jainism never became a formidable rival to the former, as it refrained from an *active* policy of conversion, in accord with its mild principles and its belief in a life of quiet and peace. It thus also practically escaped unnoticed during the Brahmanic revival, and has continued to retain its hold on a small body of followers up to the present day.[1]

10. Siddhartha, the illustrious founder of Buddhism, better known by his family name of Gautama and his spiritual title of "the Buddha" (*i.e.* the enlightened), was born about the middle of the sixth century B.C., at Kapilavastu, a small town in the then fertile and populous Nepalese Tarai. His father, Suddodana, was a person of consideration among the Sakyas (*i.e.* the powerful), a wealthy and haughty tribe of the warrior (Kshatriya) caste, which, however, followed the peaceful

Buddhism: its founder Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha.

[1] The Jains have always evinced much friendliness to Brahman *literature*.

arts of agriculture. The birth of the holy child was,



THE BUDDHA.

(From a Gandhara Sculpture in the Indian Museum.)

according to later tradition, heralded by many wondrous signs. The mother of Siddhartha died soon after his

birth, and left him to be reared up by a step-mother. He apparently was brought up in luxury and led an idle life of monotonous enjoyment. He married and had a son. His earnest nature and vigorous mind appear to have grown restive of a life of idleness and pleasure. His surroundings failed to satisfy his craving for a higher life of usefulness and noble aims. His reflective spirit returned again and again to the thought of the weakness of man, his liability to disease, age, decay, and death, and the misery of the repetition of these in life after life. He thus came to view his manner of living as impure and worthless. Unable to endure it, he left his home when barely twenty-nine years of age, and became a homeless wanderer in search of peace of mind. For two years Siddhartha studied hard and diligently, under two teachers of repute, all that Brahman philosophy had to teach him. But learning failed to bring him mental comfort. He then retired to the woods of Uruvèla (near the modern Buddha-Gayá), and there spent many years in disciplining his mind and body by severe austerities. But self-inflicted pain also failed to give him peace. At last, after nearly killing himself by the rigour of his penance, he gave up the life of self-mortification as useless and returned to the world. Shortly after, one night, when he was sitting plunged in reflection, the light that had so long eluded him dawned on him. He believed himself to have got a clear glimpse of the truth; to have become enlightened. The discovery brought him immediate and limitless peace. That moment was a turning-point, not only in his life, but in the history of the world; for he then rose above the selfishness of resting content with achieving his own deliverance, and realized that he was not merely the *enlightened*, but was also the *enlightener* (*Buddha*), that he had a mission, and that it was his duty to publish his discovery to the world so as to

ensure the salvation of other suffering men and women.

His preaching and influence.

11. Siddhartha, henceforth known as the Buddha, then began a long ministry of over forty-four years, during which he wandered about from place to place in the districts around Benares, gathering followers and organizing his order. He won the hearts of his hearers, who found in him not a mere exponent of dry philosophy, but a very wise and kindly-hearted friend and guide. He addressed the people in their own vernacular, and his unfailing tact, sympathy, and even temper made him a successful preacher. When at last he died, about 480 B.C., at the advanced age of eighty years, at Kusinagara, he had succeeded in gaining a very large following throughout the countries over which he had wandered. Buddhist traditions relate with pride that even the powerful kings of Magadha and Kosala, Ajatasatru, and Prasenajit heard of the master and paid him State visits.

His teachings.

12. The teaching of the Buddha was very simple. Like many others of his day, he was deeply sensitive to human misery, and regarded life as suffering. Like them, he also believed that death did not end this misery, as it was followed by rebirth in another life. But he disagreed from his fellow-teachers and from the Brahmans as to the cause of this misery, and the way in which it could be overcome. To the Brahman philosopher all existence was unreal, the result of an illusion like what one feels and sees in a dream. To him the way to enlightenment lay in realizing this unreality. The old-fashioned Brahman taught, on the other hand, that a happy life followed the performance of the prescribed sacrifices and ritual. Other sectaries (including the Jains) regarded self-mortification as the first step towards knowledge. The Buddha discarded all these views. He taught that the

thirst for life, for pleasures, and for power was at the root of all suffering; that the cessation of the thirst would end this suffering; and that the destruction of this thirst could be brought about by following the "noble eightfold path" of a virtuous life, which consisted in right faith, right aims, right speech, right action, right living, right endeavour, right thought, and right meditation. He also laid great stress upon a life of moral purity, and enjoined service and reverence to the wise, filial and conjugal affection and duty, and good works, charity, temperance, lowliness, contentment, gratitude, patience, self-restraint, and love to all living beings. To the small circle of his more advanced disciples he also taught the principles of his somewhat abstruse system of philosophy and theology.

His monastic order.

13. To prevent his teachings dying out, and to spread them over the world, the Buddha laid the foundation of an order of ascetics into which women were also admitted. Within this order of monks and nuns caste had no place. By this, and by his declaration that a pure life and the deliverance it led to were open to all alike irrespective of age, sex, or social position, the Buddha tacitly discouraged the institution of caste. This, combined with his disbelief in the value of sacrifices and the divine authority of the Veda, kept his sect outside the Brahmanic fold. But the teachings of the Buddha were largely based on Brahman ideas, which he had adapted to illustrate his own conclusions. Even during his life he counted many worthy Brahmans among his disciples. He forebore to attack Brahmanism, and did not encourage any conflict with it. He cannot, therefore, be justly regarded as heading a revolt against the Brahman religion and social order. Buddhism and Brahmanism continued to exist side by side for many generations.

Buddhism and Brahmanism.

But grave political events, which had begun to take shape even during the lifetime of the Buddha, were destined before long to push his teachings to a position of popularity and eminence, and sow them broadcast, not merely over India, but over countries far beyond its limits.

CHAPTER V

India, B.C. 600–321

SECTION I

The Rise of the Kingdom of Magadha

1. We obtain our first connected knowledge of Indian political history from the sacred books of the Buddhists and the Jains, as well as the traditions preserved in certain very old Brahmanic works of uncertain date called the Puranas. From these it is possible to piece together the outlines of the history of Northern India from about the middle of the seventh century B.C.

Sources of information.

2. During the times when the older portions of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata were composed (tenth century B.C.), the centres of political influence had been on the upper waters of the Jumna and the Ganges. The kingdoms of the Kurus and the Panchalas were then the most powerful, while those of Kosala, Kasi, and Videha were also famous, though not so powerful.

States of North India during the Epic period

3. By 650 B.C., however, all this had changed. The Kuru, Panchala, and Kasi kingdoms had sunk into the background, and had come within the political control of the kingdom of Kosala; Videha, which in the Epic period is represented as a kingdom, is now occupied by eight allied

and about B.C. 650.

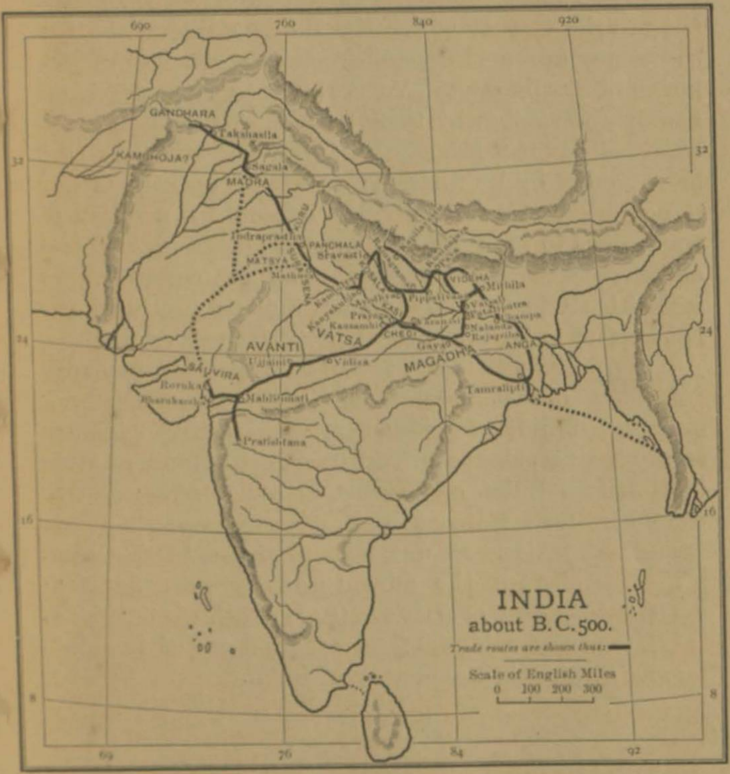
tribes, amongst whom the *Vrijjians* (*i.e.* the *Lichchavis* of Vaisali and the *Videhas* of Mithila) are the most influential. In the lower course of the Ganges the kingdom of Magada is rapidly advancing to the position of a great power. South of the Jumna, the country now called Rajputana and Malwa forms the great kingdom of *Avanti*. The *Matsyas* and the *Surasenas* appear to have been overshadowed by the power of this new State. To the north-east of Avanti and to the south of the old kingdom of Kasi lies the warlike kingdom of *Vatsa*, with its less powerful neighbour *Chedi*, forming a buffer between three powerful neighbours—Kosala, Magadha, and Avanti. In the shadow of the mountains of the north-west and in the Panjab and Sindh lie the territories of small kingdoms or tribes, maintaining an independence that is fast becoming precarious.

The growth of the kingdom of Magadha after B.C. 600.

4. By the first half of the sixth century B.C. a change began in the political conditions described above. Under the able Sisunaga dynasty (founded about 600 B.C.), Magadha took the position of the premier state of Northern India, which Kosala had hitherto occupied. Bimbisara, the fifth king of the line, conquered the small kingdom of Anga and gained thereby the control of the lower course of the Ganges. The acquisition of this principality strengthened him considerably. Unable to extend his dominion to the south and west by the presence of natural obstacles in those directions, he sought to extend his power to the north and north-west. He acquired the principality of Kasi from Kosala by marriage. By another marriage with one of the ruling families of Vaisali he strengthened his northern frontier. He rebuilt his capital Rajagriha, but before he could finish his work he was murdered by his son Ajatasatru, the ablest member of the dynasty (about 495 B.C.). The new

Ajatasatru, B.C. 495.

ruler appears to have carried on a successful war with Kosala, and obtained as the result of it the hand of the daughter of Prasenajit, king of Kosala, as well as the confirmation of his title to the territory of Kasi. He next conquered the allied clans of Videha (Tirhut), and



extended his territory northwards to the foot of the mountains. At a strategic point on the Ganges, near its junction with the Gandak, he built a great fortress, which during the reign of his grandson developed into the famous city of Pataliputra (Patna), the future capital of Magadha.

Causes of the growth of the kingdom of Magadha.

5. The growth of Magadha under Ajatasatru and his successors was much helped by the natural advantages possessed by it, as well as the weakness or the quarrels of their rivals. The successor of Prasenajit in Kosala was Virudhaka, a feeble and cruel prince who destroyed the Sakyas, the clan to which the Buddha belonged. His successors are not remembered, and were evidently insignificant persons. Vatsa and Avanti were apparently weakened by their frequent wars and unable to stand against Magadha. On the other hand, the latter, aided by its fertility, its central position on the Gangetic river system giving it access by a series of waterways to the interior, as well as by its wealth and military strength, was easily able to overcome the opposition of rivals. Its kings, though cruel men, do not appear to have lacked ability. Hence, by the time that the Sisunaga dynasty was overthrown (about the first half of the fourth century B.C.) by a family of Sudra usurpers, known in history as the Nandas, Magadha had become the premier state in Northern India, and seems to have extended over the entire area watered by the Ganges and its tributaries. It was known to the Greeks even before the adventurous prince Chandragupta overthrew (B.C. 321) the last Nanda, and laid the foundation of one of the most famous empires in the history of India.

The Nandas.

Chandragupta Maurya, B.C. 321.

SECTION II

The Conquests of Darius and Alexander

The rise of the Persian empire.

6. While the movement which was to result in the union of Northern India under the primacy of Magadha was thus in progress, important changes were taking place among the ancient kingdoms of Western Asia, the results of which were destined to have some influence on India also.

During the middle of the sixth century B.C., and about the time of the birth of the Buddha, a small Aryan power under the leadership of a great conqueror, usually known in history as Cyrus (Kai-Khushru), had risen in Persia and had overthrown the older empires of Media, Babylonia, Assyria, and Lydia. Before the last quarter of the century (*i.e.* 525 B.C.) the whole area from the Mediterranean sea to the frontiers of India was embraced by this new empire. Between 521–486 B.C., under the great king Darius I., the bounds of the Persian empire were further extended, till they stretched beyond the Danube and the Indus respectively. Sometime between B.C. 515–490 (*i.e.* during the last years of the Buddha), the armies of Darius conquered the lands now forming Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Western Panjab, and Sindh. These countries were then more fertile than they are now, and appear to have been densely peopled. Darius was a wise and careful ruler as well as a great conqueror. When he introduced a new administrative system by which the empire was divided into provinces, each under a Governor or Satrap (*Kshatrapavan*), and paying a fixed annual tax, the Indian dominions were included in the arrangement and formed into a separate province. A third of the tribute of the Asiatic provinces is stated to have come from this province, and to have been paid in gold. Under the orders of Darius, his admiral, Skylax,

Cyrus.

Darius "the Great," B.C. 521–486.

His Indian dominions.

Expedition of Skylax.



DARIUS, THE SON OF HYSTASPES.
(*From a Persian Sculpture.*)

a native of Caryanda in Caria, explored the course of the Indus to its mouths, and found his way by the ocean to the Red Sea.

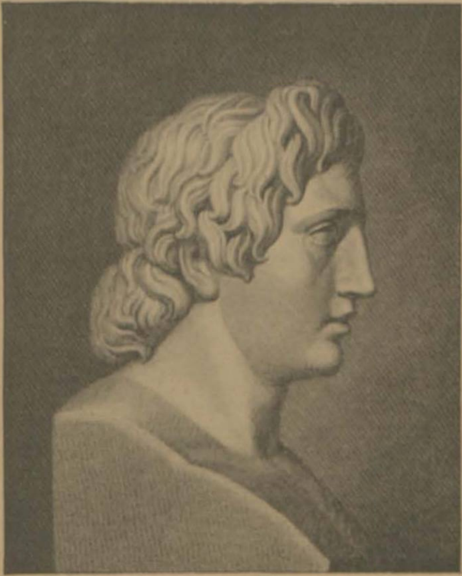
Results of the Persian connection with India.

7. Indian troops are said to have fought under the Persians in Greece during the days of Darius's successor, Xerxes (B.C. 486–465). Sometime after Darius's death the princes and tribes living on the eastern bank of the Indus, as well as in Sindh, regained their freedom. But the peaceful relations established with Persia were kept up, and they proved useful to both countries. They gave a great impulse to the trade of India with the West, which was carried either by the overland route through the north-western passes, or by the sea from the mouths of the Indus up the Persian Gulf. This intercourse also doubtless facilitated an interchange of ideas between the two countries, which should have been to their mutual advantage. The introduction of an old form of writing, the Kharoshthi alphabet, and the knowledge of an elaborate system of imperial administration are perhaps the larger benefits accruing to India from this connection. The inscriptions of Asoka are very similar in the *form* used to those of Darius the Great. The example of the great empire of Persia also not improbably gave birth to the idea of the unification of Northern India. And, above all, it brought India into touch with the Greeks, the most progressive people of ancient times, by drawing it within the scheme of conquest of Alexander "the Great," when he overthrew the Persian empire (B.C. 330).

8. In B.C. 334 the Persian empire was invaded by Alexander of Macedon, who was destined to prove himself one of the greatest military leaders and statesmen of all times. Within five years he had the whole empire at his feet. He was fired with the ambition of extending his rule over all the then known regions

of the world. Of these India was one of the most important. Vague rumours of its culture, wealth, and splendour had been reaching the Greeks since the sixth century B.C. Skylax of Caryanda had left an account of his famous voyage. Other travellers' stories were collected in the work of Ctesias, a Greek physician, who lived in the Persian court about 380 B.C.

Conquest of the Persian empire by Alexander the Great of Macedon.



ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Further, as the heir to the possessions of the Persian kings, Alexander desired to recover the lost province of India.

9. In B.C. 330, Alexander marched through the valley of the Helmund, North-Western Baluchistan, and Afghanistan to the Hindu Kush on his way to the

Balkh (Bactria) and Sogdiana in pursuit of a rebel. After conquering the lands of Central Asia, he returned to the Kabul valley early in the summer of B.C. 327, having crossed the Hindu Kush by its lofty western passes. After resting his army for a short time, he set out again in November 327 B.C. to conquer India. Sending the main body of his army into it through the usual route over the Khaibar pass, he proceeded northwards in midwinter and conquered the warlike tribes inhabiting the difficult mountain tracts of Chitral and the adjacent river valleys, and thereby safeguarded his communications. After this he rejoined the main body of his troops, and crossed the Indus near Attock (early in B.C. 326), and marched at the head of an army of more than 80,000 men, besides camp followers, to Takshasila (Taxila), the largest town in the north-west of India.

His invasion of India, B.C. 330.

10. At the time of Alexander's invasion, North-Western India was occupied by a large number of small chief-ships and independent tribes, which were jealous of each other and unable to unite against a common enemy. Amongst these Abhisara (Abisares), the ruler of the district adjoining Urasa (Hazara) and Kashmir, his brother Ambhi (Omphis), who ruled at Takshasila (Taxila), two princes both named Paurava (Porus), whose territories extended between the Jhelum (Hydaspes) and the Ravi (Hydraotes), and a tribe named the Katthis (the Cathæans), whose capital, Sangala, was situated near the modern Amritsar, were the most powerful. To the east of the Satlej stretched the great empire of the Nandas (Nandres), while the lower course of the Indus was occupied by many independent tribes, amongst whom the Malavas (the Malli), who lived *above* modern Multan, and their neighbours the Kshudrakas (Oxydrakai) were the chief. The peoples inhabiting the Panjab and Sindh were warlike, and the

Condition of North-Western India at the time.

country itself was more fertile and populous than now, and able to put into the field very large bodies of troops. The task of conquering this region was therefore not an easy one.

11. Leaving Takshasila, whose chief paid ready



N.W. INDIA
at the time of Alexander.

homage to him, Alexander marched south during the rainy season of 326 B.C. to the Jhelum (the Hydaspes), to meet the warlike ruler, the Paurava (Porus), who had sent him a defiance. When he arrived at the river, he found the army of the Indian king collected on the opposite bank. For several

Alexander and Porus.

days the two armies kept watching each other's movements, Alexander being unable to cross the swollen river in the face of a determined enemy. After leading "Porus" to think that he was undecided, Alexander triumphed over him by a clever artifice. One dark and stormy night, he marched at the head of a picked body of troops to a ford sixteen miles above his camp, and succeeded in crossing the river unnoticed in the tumult of the storm, before daybreak. The Indian army was taken by surprise, and the superior discipline of the Macedonian troops and the generalship of Alexander gave the invaders a victory after a very hard-contested battle. Alexander combined policy with generosity, and conciliated "Porus" by restoring to him all his possessions, and thereby gained his lasting friendship and loyalty.

Battle of the Jelum.

12. After founding two cities near the site of his victory, Alexander crossed the Chenab (Acesines) and marched into the territory of the second "Porus," who, however, fled before him. Alexander followed him over the Ravi (Hydraotes), but soon turned from the pursuit to capture Sangala, the capital of the warlike Cathæans. Within a few marches lay the great empire on the Gangetic plain, of whose wealth and splendour he had heard a great deal, and which he longed to conquer. But when he came to the Beas (the Hyphasis) and attempted to cross it, his troops, worn out by constant fighting and the toil of long marches through some of the most difficult regions and trying climates of the world, refused to proceed further, and desired to be led back home to their wives and children, whom they had not seen for many weary years. Alexander was forced to yield, and much against his will retraced his steps homeward.

Further conquests in the Punjab.

Alexander returns homeward.

13. Arriving at the Hydaspes (Jhelum), he prepared

to sail down that river and the Indus in a flotilla of boats commanded by his admiral, Nearchus, and escorted by divisions of the army marching on both banks. Then, before embarking, he made arrangements for permanently securing his conquests. "Sophytes" (Saubhuti), king of the Salt Range, was subdued. "Omphis" (Ambhi) and his rival "Porus" (the Paurava) were reconciled. The former was confirmed in the possession of the land between the Indus and the Jhelum (Hydaspes), while the other received the territories occupied by seven entire tribes, between the Jhelum (Hydaspes), and the Ravi (Hyphasis).

His arrangements for governing the conquered territories.

14. The great conqueror then embarked in the autumn of B.C. 326, and began his descent of the river. He conquered on the way the powerful allied tribes living on the Indus, including the Malli (Malavas) and the Oxydraki (Kshudrakas), and nearly lost his life in a heroic attack on the capital of the former. Agreeably to his custom in conquered countries, he founded towns at promising spots along the river. Of these one was Patala (Haidarabad), at the head of the Indus delta. The whole of Sindh was next formed into a separate province. Then, after exploring the mouth of the Indus, he divided his army, and sending one body through the Bolan Pass and Northern Baluchistan, he himself marched back at the head of another division through the waterless region of the Mekran or Southern Baluchistan (Gedrosia). The remaining forces were sent by sea under Nearchus, with orders to meet the main body at the head of the Persian Gulf.

Alexander in Sindh.

The voyage of Nearchus.

15. So ended the Greek invasion. Alexander had been in India for less than three years, and more than half the period was spent in the campaigns to the east of the Indus. He built cities and left garrisons in the

conquered lands, planned the construction of harbours and docks at Patala, appointed governors to rule the new territories, and formed alliances with powerful Indian princes like Ambhi (Omphis) and the Paurava (Porus). His intention of maintaining his power permanently in the country is shown by these arrangements. But in spite of them, the Greek political connection with India was severed almost immediately after it had begun. Within three months of the conqueror's departure, mutinous troops murdered his governor in Sindh. The life of the great king himself was soon after (June, 323 B.C.) cut short with tragic suddenness during the thirteenth year of his reign and the thirty-third year of his life. He had only just settled down in Babylon to begin an era of peace and good government. The effects of Alexander's death were felt by the whole of the ancient world; but in no country were they so immediate as in India. Within a few months of his death the Macedonians were driven west of the Indus. Subsequently, as the result of an organized general rising, the invaders had to leave India altogether.

Alexander's work in India.

His death, B.C. 323.

Its results in India.

16. The Macedonian rule in India was thus short-lived. Still, many important results followed it. Alexander was not a mere invader. In his train were many Greeks of eminence in the world of science and letters. He was himself a born explorer with an insatiable thirst for information. He caused the countries through which he passed to be surveyed and studied with thoroughness, and his expeditions resulted in a vast increase of European knowledge of the East. The routes of Indo-European trade were laid open, and the commercial relations of India with Western countries were strengthened. Some degree of reciprocal influence was

Results of Alexander's expedition.

Exploration.

Trade.

Art and literature.

also exercised on each other by Greek and Indian art and literature.

17. India also learnt from the invasion some useful military and political lessons. Alexander had won his victories over large bodies of Indians through his wonderful generalship as well as the superior organization and discipline of his army. His campaigns proved for the first time the merits of the European system of arming, drilling, and leading troops. Further, the small states and free tribes of the Panjab and Sind had been weakened by their fights with Alexander, and their overthrow by an ambitious Indian power was thereby rendered easy. The fear of another foreign invasion, and the conviction that it would be impossible to withstand it without union, probably made such states now willing to accept the protection and supremacy of a strong Indian kingdom. Valuable lessons in statecraft, especially regarding the building up and management of great kingdoms, were also doubtless learnt from the empire of Alexander. The ground was thus ready for the erection of a powerful native kingdom in Hindustan. Such a power soon after came into being when Chandragupta, a descendant of the ruling family of Magadha, who had been a fugitive in the camp of Alexander, took advantage of the confusion following the great king's death to gather a large army, and with its aid to make himself master first of the Panjab and next of the extensive kingdom of Magadha, then groaning under the oppression and misrule of the last king of the Nanda dynasty.

Arts of war and government.

Rise of a great Indian monarchy.

Under Chandragupta Maurya.

SECTION III

Social and Economic Conditions of North India, 600–350 B.C.

Sources of information.

18. Interesting glimpses of the social and economic condition of North India during the three centuries preceding the foundation of the empire of Chandragupta are available in the sacred books of the Buddhists and Jains as well as the oldest of the Brahmanical law books (*dharma-sútra*). The information obtained from these sources has to be supplemented by Greek accounts, since the Indus country, being the stronghold of Brahmanism, was neglected by the new sects and left more or less unnoticed in their books.

The chief states and tribes.

19. The chief political divisions of Upper India in the sixth century have already been described (*vide* Chapter IV). Their names are given in a stock list of the "sixteen great Powers" found in Buddhist literature, which includes, besides those mentioned in the previous chapter, border peoples like the Aswakas, the Kambhojas, and the Gandharas, and tribes of minor importance like the Mallas of Kusinagara and Pava. The states and tribes of North-East India are naturally those named, being the centres of political activity in those times as well as the early homes of Buddhism. The neglected states and kingless tribes (*arashtra-jana*) of the Panjab and Sindh were thrust into some prominence later on by the invasion of Alexander, but they sank into obscurity again after he retired from the country and left them to be conquered by Chandragupta.

Life of the people.

20. An important feature of this list is that it still refers to states not as *countries*, as we do now, but as *peoples*. Thus the lands of the Kosalas, the Kasis, and the Vatsas are mentioned, but they are not referred to as we should now

do as Kosala, Kasi, and Vatsa. This points to the various peoples not having been permanently settled for many generations in the territories then occupied by them. The absence of many large towns during the period (*i.e.* the sixth century B.C.) also confirms this inference.[1] People lived invariably in villages or towns, which were generally separated from each other by large stretches of forest or woodland, which were infested by wild animals, robbers, escaped criminals, and runaway slaves. Outside the towns there were few roads worth the name, though certain long-established trade routes connected the various parts of India with one another. Over these caravans of merchants moved together, and transported, under the protection of hired escorts, articles of little bulk and much value, like silks and muslins, costly weapons and armour, precious stones, gold and jewellery, ivory, sandalwood, and rare spices and perfumes. In the deserts of Rajputana land-pilots were employed to guide such caravans. Trade was much hampered by the heavy cost of carriage, the risks of travel, and the numerous tolls and taxes levied on articles of merchandise as they passed through each petty state.

Towns and villages.

Forests.

Roads.

Difficulties of trade.

21. Of the different highways of trade, the Ganges and the Jumna were naturally the chief. Coasting voyages were also undertaken by adventurous mariners from Tamralipti (Tamluk), on one of the mouths of the Ganges, to Burma, Ceylon, and along the west coast to Bharukachcha (Bhroach), Roruka (the capital of Sauvira), and Supparaka, the great ports of the Kathiawar and Gujarat. A voyage to Babylon (Baveru) up the Persian Gulf is also mentioned. The overland route to the north-west countries started from Takshasila (near Peshawar), the

Main routes of trade.

[1] But though cities were few, those in existence were of large size.

great emporium on the frontier. A long road skirted the base of the mountains, and connected this city with Sravasti in Kosala, from which roads branched off to Ujjain and the western ports (through Kausambi on the Jumna, the capital of the Vatsas), and to Tamralipti, through Vaisali, Pataliputra, Nalanda, Rajagriha, and Gaya. Cities like Ujjain, Kausambi, Varanasi (Benares), and Takshasila, where different routes met, were naturally great centres of trade (see Map).

22. The mass of the people, however, lived then as now, in villages. The great field of each village was separated from the adjoining forests by a common enclosure, and was divided into strips cultivated by different families. Woodland and pasture grounds were held in common by the whole village. No member of a village could sell or pledge his share in it without the consent of his fellow-members and the village council (called in later times the *Panchayet*). Lands were cultivated by their owners or occupiers by their own labour and that of slaves. Working for hire was considered a disgrace. Slavery was permitted, but slaves were used as domestic servants and were kindly treated. Properties were divided equally among sons, the eldest and sometimes the youngest son receiving in some places an extra share. The villagers united together in making tanks, irrigation channels, roads, and buildings. A land-tax ranging from a twelfth to a sixth of the gross produce was paid in kind through the hereditary village headman to the king. Seasons of scarcity through droughts or floods were not uncommon, and the country suffered much from such disasters through absence of proper means of communication. As a protection

Village life.

Slavery.

Inheritance laws.

Village co-operation.

Taxation in kind.

Scarcity.

against such misfortunes, and for the use of armies on the march, the taxes were paid in grain, and were stored in different parts of the country in royal granaries.

Grain-stores.

23. All the chief trades and occupations of a fairly advanced society were in existence. Trades and crafts were usually hereditary, and tended to become sub-castes. The principal trades were organized as *guilds* (*srenya*), each under a headman (*pramukha*). In cities all the workmen following a particular occupation usually lived together in a street by themselves.

Occupation.

Guilds.

24. Exchange of goods was carried on by simple barter. Money was in use. Rude coins consisting of pieces of copper with designs or marks *punched* on them by the issuers (generally private men like the goldsmiths and guilds, and not the State as now) in proof of their purity and weight, were in circulation.[1] Silver was not in use, being still apparently a rarer metal than gold, and gold itself was very scarcely used. Silver was then, as it is now, one of the principal imports from the West. Rice and cattle were also used to denote value.

Money.

25. Cities and towns were protected by walls and fortifications, which were often of stone. Houses, however, appear to have been usually built of wood, as in Malabar and Burma even at the present day. Woodcarving was a very flourishing art, and the woodwork of the dwellings of princes and rich persons was often beautifully carved and painted. Large mansions of many storeys and broad streets are mentioned. But the houses and the streets of the common people were doubtless crowded and badly drained and bred disease.

Architecture: secular

[1] Coinage appears to have been introduced into India (probably from Babylon) in the seventh century B.C.

26. The progress of Buddhism gave a powerful impulse to religious architecture, and gradually stone buildings came more and more into use, though not apparently undertaken on a large scale till the third century B.C. Monuments of brick and stone (*stupa* or *chaitya*) were raised over the ashes and relics of the Buddha and other holy men. These were enclosed by highly carved ornamental railings of wood, and later on of stone. Pillars (*stambha*) bearing sacred emblems were raised by the pious to invite the attention of people to the teachings of the Buddha, and monasteries (*vihara*) were built to give permanent abodes to the Buddhist and Jain clergy. The new buildings and monuments were usually of stone or brick, and in them the details of the old wooden architecture and decoration were reproduced with faithfulness.

and religious.

27. Social distinctions were founded on birth. The division into four castes (*Varna*) was known, but in North-East India (Kosala, Videha, and Magadha) the warriors (Kshatriya) appear to have been held in greater esteem than the priestly class (Brahmana). The fact that both the Buddha and Mahavira belonged to the caste of nobles also, without doubt, increased the prestige of that class as against the claims of priestly order, while, during the fourth century B.C., the rise of Sudra dynasties like those of the Nandas and of Chandragupta tended to depress the pre-eminence of both the priests and the nobles. The bulk of the people were classed as Sudras, though certain low tribes (*hína-játi*) like the aboriginal bird-catchers and low occupations (*hína-silpa*) like that of the barber or the leather-worker were placed below it in the social scale. A fair amount of liberty existed in choosing occupations, and even nobles and Brahmans gave up their hereditary callings and took to agriculture, trade, and

Caste.

manual crafts without losing thereby their social position.

28. Education was cheap. It was imparted by distinguished teachers collected together in great centres of learning like Takshasila (where King Prasenajit of Kosala received his schooling) and Benares (where the Buddha preached his first sermon to a cultured audience), by wandering scholars and ascetics (*Parivrajaka*), and by the inmates of Buddhist and Jain monasteries. The period of schooling extended from nine to thirty-six years. Most teachers accepted personal service and payments in kind from pupils in lieu of money fees. Princes, wealthy men, and the governing bodies of great cities gave grants for the feeding and education of the poor, and rewarded learning by presents, pensions, and assignments of land-revenue.

Education.

29. An extensive vernacular (Prakrit) literature grew up from the teachings of the Buddha, Mahavira, and their followers, side by side with the older Brahmanical literature, but from the nature of its origin it was almost exclusively confined to religious topics. Sanskrit and the old Brahman learning were driven into the background and claimed an ever-diminishing body of adherents. Writing in several alphabets was known and in use as early as 500 B.C., but principally among merchants and Government accountants, and not among learned men. Learning was still transmitted orally, and books were got up by rote and stored in the memory.

The Vernaculars and Sanskrit.

Writing.

30. Neither the Buddha nor Mahavira composed any religious or doctrinal works. The life of the former (and, to a smaller degree, that of the other also) had been one of tireless activity passed in a continuous round of good works. The personality of the Buddha made a vivid and

Growth of Buddhism—the Councils.

lasting impression on the minds of people of all classes in his day, and before he died he gathered round himself a host of disciples and followers from all ranks and walks of life. The love and veneration he commanded were shown by the contest between some of the influential tribes and princes of his day for a share of his mortal relics,[1] as well as by the awe and sense of forlornness which came over his disciples after his death. They became anxious to collect his scattered discourses and teachings and to arrange them in such a form as to secure their permanency and harmony, and to prevent arguments within the sect regarding their content and meaning. With this end in view, the chief disciples of the Buddha met soon after his death, and arrived at an agreement regarding the chief points of his creed and system of discipline. The work was done well and in time, as even during the lifetime of the master a disaffected follower, Devadatta, had separated from him and founded a new sect, and as there was a danger of similar splits among the faithful after the Buddha's death. In course of time, when fresh disputes arose among the Buddhists regarding points of doctrine and discipline the example of the original disciples was followed, and big meetings of prominent Buddhists were held to settle the questions at issue. The assemblies were usually followed by the public recital of the holy texts of the sect. Many such meetings, some on a large and others on an insignificant scale, must have been held, but of these we have no record. One of these large assemblies was held during the third century B.C. under the patronage of the great King Asoka. Some memory of earlier disputes and of the meetings held to allay them have been preserved in Buddhist tradition, which loves

[1] During the recent excavation of a stupa near Peshawar a casket was discovered purporting to contain the bones of the Buddha, placed there by the great King Kanishka.

to describe this assembly as the *third* great council (*Sangiti*) of sect, and to refer to two others said to have been held respectively during the years of the Buddha's death and of its first centenary, as those in which the books of the Buddhist canon were collected and arranged.

The Buddha deified.

31. The Buddha loved to stress the eternal character of his teaching by speaking of himself as only one in a *succession* of Buddhas, who, since the beginning of the world, had attained to wisdom and helped at various times in freeing mankind from the bonds of existence. In course of time, when his direct disciples had died out, and knowledge of him had become traditional, the events of his life were coloured, and a tendency was set up for his worship as a god. Divine honours were paid even to his relics, and miracles were ascribed to their influence.

Spread of Buddhism—its causes.

32. This change in the character of Buddhism, apart from the personal influence of its founder, and the innate merits of his teachings had much to do in spreading them among the people, who could not grasp their deeper moral and philosophical import. Other impulses to the spread of the religion were found in its Church organization, and the political events of the times following the death of the Buddha. Unlike Brahmanism, Buddhism possessed from the start a unity which was the result of its monastic system. Groups of monks settled in monasteries founded by rich Buddhists, and from there spread the tenets of their faith among the surrounding people. Important questions concerning the whole body of the Buddhists were settled in Church synods or councils (*Sangiti*), held with the concurrence, if not the actual patronage, of princes loyal to the faith. The rise of Sudra dynasties, like those of the Nandas and Chandragupta, during the fifth and fourth centuries

B.C. won for the new religion their support in rivalry to the older Brahmanism, whose followers looked down on the newer dynasties as low-born usurpers. Further, Buddhism accommodated itself gradually to the prejudices of the masses, absorbing within its system the gods and goddesses of popular belief (*e.g.* the *Lokapalas*, or "Guardians of the quarters," like Indra, Varuna, Kubera, and others; *Sri*, the goddess of luck). Finally, when, after gaining a firm hold on great numbers of the people, Buddhism won, in the third century B.C., the adherence of the most powerful ruler of the age (*i.e.* Asoka), it was spread both within and without India with all the strength of a great State system of missionary enterprise.

Changes in Brahmanism.

33. The popular Brahmanic faith also underwent silent changes during the same period. The old Vedic gods were still worshipped by name, but they were deemed to be of less account than before. Even *Brahma*, the father-god of the Upanishads, who is referred to in Buddhist tradition also as the foremost of the gods, retires into the background before sectarian gods like *Siva* and *Vishnu*, who with him form together the Brahmanic Trinity (*Trimurti*). Krishna, the son of Devaki, the hero of the "Lord's Song" (*Bhagavadgita*), is identified with an incarnation (*Avatar*) of Vishnu. Old popular beliefs in spirits residing in sacred stones and trees, and taking the form of serpents, birds, and half-human monsters (*Yaksha*, *Naga*, *Kinnara*, *Garuda*), were countenanced by Brahmanism as well as Buddhism, and the Hindu pantheon was peopled by a number of minor deities, whom the common people continued to worship.[1]

[1] They continue to be so worshipped to this day.

CHAPTER VI

India, B.C. 321–232

SECTION I

The Early Mauryas, B.C. 321–232

1. The retirement of Alexander the Great from the Panjab marks a turning-point in Indian history. It was followed by a memorable event. Prior to it, there had been no common power supreme over any very considerable area of India. During the fifth and fourth centuries, as we saw, a tendency for the rise of such a power arose, and the kingdom of Magadha, helped by its favourable geographical position, by its succession of able kings, and by an army strong in its elephant brigade, gradually won a pre-eminence over the other powers of North India. At the time of the Greek invasion the whole of the Gangetic plain was ruled by a king named Nanda, who was regarded as the wealthiest and most powerful Indian ruler of the time. This king, or the last of his successors, was overthrown by a kinsman named Chandragupta, who had headed a successful patriotic rising against the invaders, and who now turned his arms against the reigning dynasty of Magadha, which had apparently made itself unpopular through

The Nandas in Magadha.

Their overthrow and the rise of the Mauryas

oppression.[1] About B.C. 321 this adventurer established himself firmly on the throne of Pataliputra, and founded a new dynasty (known in history as the Maurya) and a new era. This event marked the beginning of a new and prosperous epoch in Indian history, as for the first time the greater part of India came under one king during the reign of Chandragupta and his immediate successors, Bindusara and Asoka.

Chandragupta, B.C. 321-297.

2. The romantic career of Chandragupta made a vivid impression on his contemporaries, and many accounts of him are preserved in Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, and even Greek legends. He was a young man when he came as a fugitive to Alexander's camp, and so he could not have been much past middle age when he died (about B.C. 297). That he was a rare leader of men who combined in himself very high administrative and military talent is proved by the rapidity with which he established his rule over the greater part of India, and by the peaceful succession which followed his death. The Greek accounts describe him as a strong and vigorous ruler, ever alert to put down crime and disaffection. About 305 B.C. Seleucus, surnamed the Conqueror, one of the generals and successors of Alexander, invaded India in imitation of his great master, and strove to restore the Greek power on Indian soil. In Chandragupta, however, he met his match. The details of the conflict between the two great kings are obscure, but from the result it is clear that Seleucus had not the best of it, for he had to retire beyond the Hindu Kush

War with Seleucus, B.C. 305.

[1] The success of Chandragupta is attributed in Hindu legend to the loyalty and genius of his Brahman minister, Chanakya, whose name has since come to be applied in Indian literature to uncommon skill in diplomacy. A Sanskrit work of much interest, on the art of government (Artha-sutra), attributed to Chanakya, has recently been published by the Mysore *darbar*.

mountains and cede to the Indian king all the provinces to the south and east of that range, including the countries now called Afghanistan and Baluchistan. The Indian kingdom thus obtained a splendid natural frontier, the recovery of which is at the present day the great aim of many Anglo-Indian statesmen. Seleucus also gave a daughter in marriage to Chandragupta, and maintained a Greek embassy at the Indian court (303 B.C.). He received in return a present of 500 elephants, which helped him to victory in his subsequent contests in Western Asia with the other successors of Alexander.

B.C. 303.

Megasthenes.

Megasthenes, the envoy of Seleucus and the first Greek ambassador at Pataliputra, was a careful observer of men and manners. He left behind him a capital account of what he saw and heard while resident in the country, but only fragments of his book are now available, and all modern accounts of Mauryan India are indirectly based upon them.

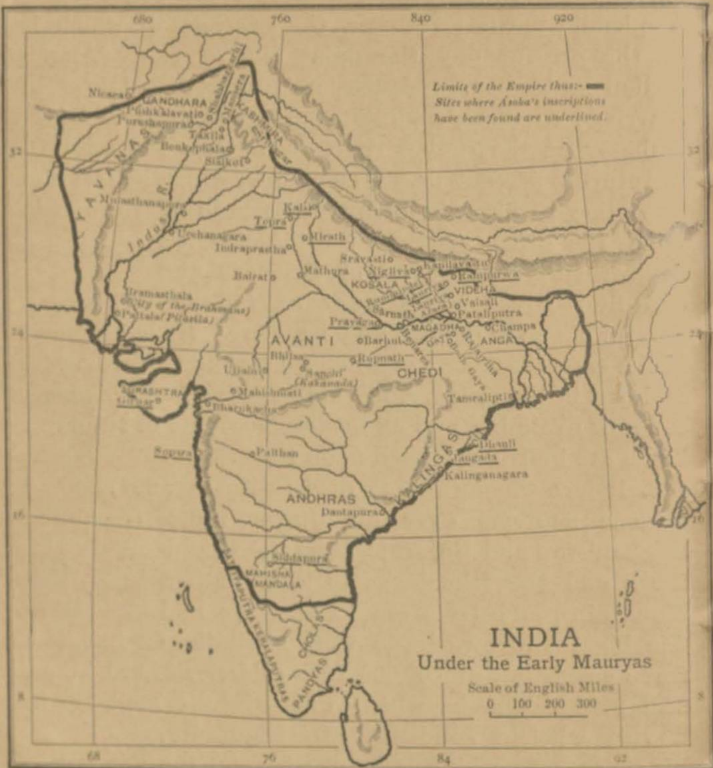
Extent of his power.

3. Before Chandragupta died (about B.C. 297) he had become supreme over all Upper India (including Afghanistan and Gujarat), from the Hindu-Kush and the Himalayas to the Vindhya Mountains, and from sea to sea. He had the biggest army of the time in India, an immense force consisting of 600,000 foot soldiers, 30,000 horse, and 9000 elephants, which was carefully kept up in a very efficient condition. Of Bindusara, his successor, nothing is known beyond the fact that he kept up friendly intercourse with Seleucus and his successor Antiochus, as well as the other Greek princes. From the fact that at the time of the accession of his son Asoka, the Dakhan (with the exception of Kalinga, or the coast strip between the mouths of the Mahanadi and the Krishna) was included in the Mauryan empire, it is inferred that the provinces south of Vindhya Mountains were added

Bindusara, B.C. 297-272.

to the kingdom either by Bindusara, or more probably by his great father.

4. Bindusara died about B.C. 272, and was succeeded



by his son Asoka-Vardhana (usually known as Asoka), the most illustrious ruler of ancient times. We are now fortunate in possessing an authentic record of his reign in his incriptions, which are the oldest and by far the most valuable historical records yet discovered in India. They have been found generally by the side of ancient highways graven on massive rocks, or pillars

Asoka (Piyadassi), B.C. 272-232.

His edicts.

of stone, and at places as remote from each other as the Nepalese Tarai, the Yuzufzai country on the north-west frontier, Girnar in Kathiawar, Siddhapura in Mysore, and Jaugada in the Ganjam district (Madras). In them the king, who delights to call himself Piyadassi (Sanskrit, *priyadarsin*, "the gracious"), speaks direct to his officers and subjects in such language as every-body could understand. As they are addressed to his subjects, it is evident that the empire of Asoka included the provinces where they have been found. Further, the fact that all of them are written practically in the same language (a dialect of Prakrit that was spoken in Magadha) shows that at the time it was understood throughout India, and that a knowledge of reading and writing was more or less general in the empire. The subject-matter of these documents shows how earnestly and persistently the emperor laboured to promote the material and moral welfare of his people. It is a matter, however, for regret that the inscriptions, on account of their being personal addresses by the king to his lieges, do not speak as fully of the history of the reign as we should desire. We have to supplement them, therefore, partly by facts gleaned from the legends which grew round his name. Even so, what we are able to learn comes up to very little when we consider how great a ruler Asoka was, and how long he reigned.

The Kalinga war, B.C. 261.

5. For some reason, not now ascertainable (perhaps a disputed succession), the new king, who at the time of his father's death (272 B.C.) was the viceroy at Ujjain, was not formally crowned for more than three years after his accession. It is, however, fairly certain that he did not wade to the throne through the blood of his nearest kindred. One of his inscriptions mentions some brothers and sisters as alive at the time of its publication[1] (B.C.

[1] *Vide* Rock-edict V.

257–256). In the twelfth year of his reign, and the ninth of his coronation (*abhisheka*), *i.e.* 261 B.C., a war broke out as the result of which the Kalingas (the territory stretching along the coast between the deltas of the Mahanadi and the Krishna), which had hitherto been independent, were conquered and annexed. The horrors of this bloody struggle made a profound impression on the mind of the gracious king who had waged it, so much so that from that time onward (as he has himself stated in undying words of remorse and sorrow) he set himself resolutely against all further thoughts of earthly conquests, and strove to promote the triumphs of righteousness (*dharma*) by becoming an ardent follower of the peace-loving religion of the Buddha. During the war, according to his own statement, 150,000 persons had been led into captivity, 100,000 had been slain, and of the ordinary people many times that number had perished through want, violence, and misery. "The loss of even the hundredth or the thousandth part of the persons who then were slain, carried away captive, or done to death in Kalinga would now," says Asoka in an edict published about B.C. 256, "be a matter of deep regret to his Majesty. Although a man should do him an injury, his Majesty holds that it must be patiently borne, so far as it can be patiently borne. Even upon the forest tribes his Majesty has compassion, and he seeks their conversion, inasmuch as the might even of his Majesty is based upon repentance. . . . This is the chiefest conquest in his Majesty's opinion, the conquest by the Law of Piety."[1]

Asoka and Buddhism.

6. The rest of his reign was passed by Asoka in accordance with this resolution, and we hear of no further wars or conquests. He thenceforth devoted himself to the work of carefully administering his vast dominions, which

[1] Rock-edict XIII., Mr. Vincent Smith's translation.

at last embraced all the country from the Himalayas as far south as the Palar river, as well as Afghanistan, Northern Baluchistan, Kashmir, and the adjacent valleys. He also strove manfully to spread righteousness, chiefly as it was conceived by the Buddha, both within and without his dominions. With this end in view, he entered the Buddhist order as a lay follower in the eleventh year after his coronation (*i.e.* 259 B.C.), abolished the royal hunts, and instituted in their place pious tours and pilgrimages. He also despatched missionaries to preach the doctrines of the Buddha to the uncivilized tribes dwelling within the empire (the Bhojas, the Pulindas, the Andhras, the Kamhhojas, and the like), to the independent states of the south —the Chola, the Pandya, the Keralaputra (Malabar), and the Satyaputra (Coorg or Kanara) kingdoms, to Ceylon, and even to the remote kingdoms of the West, ruled by the successors of Alexander (viz. Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, and Macedon). Thus, through Asoka's efforts, Buddhism was in the third century B.C. well on its way to become a world-religion.

7. Within his own dominions Asoka used his immense power to spread the moral teachings which he had learnt from Buddhism, and in later life he sought to enforce them by the appointment of a special body of officers, who were entrusted not merely with the duty of carrying out his wishes, but also with the supervision of the private life and morals of his subjects. They appear likewise to have had the control of the king's charities, which chiefly took the form of building monasteries for the religious orders, hospitals for man and beast, and rest-houses for the traveller.

The substance of his teaching was simple. Kindness to animal life, purity of mind and body, reverence and toleration were the chief virtues which his edicts sought to spread among the people. In 257 and 256

B.C. he published as many as fourteen edicts, setting forth his views on government and life generally, and, as has been already said, caused them to be incised on rocks at various points within his dominions.

These were followed soon after by two charters defining the rules for administering Kalinga, and the territories of the border tribes, and in 242 B.C. by a series of proclamations setting forth the king's moral convictions, and describing the means he had adopted to promote the well-being of his subjects. In his old age (in 240 B.C.) Asoka became a regular monk, while apparently still remaining at the head of affairs.[1] His latest edicts appear to have been issued about 232 B.C., shortly before his death, after a long and memorable reign of more than forty years.

8. Buddhist legends affirm that Asoka was a great benefactor of the Church, and credit him with the construction of numerous Buddhist shrines (stupas) and monasteries. This might well have been true, as many of Asoka's buildings were in existence during the fifth and seventh centuries A.D., when the Chinese pilgrims (Fa-hian and Hiouen Thsang) visited India. Most of the great topes (stupas) about Sanchi, near Ujjain, belong to his reign. We have also, in one of his inscriptions on a pillar which still exists, a record of a pilgrimage he made in his old age to the birth-place of the Buddha. The old Buddhist chronicles of Ceylon state that a splendid Church congress was held at Pataliputra at the instance of Asoka, and that from it delegates were sent to spread Buddhism in distant

[1] Mr. V. A. Smith, in the revised edition of his *Asoka*, is of opinion that the king became a Buddhist in B.C. 261–260, and a regular Buddhist monk in 259 B.C.; that throughout the rest of the reign he was "both monk and monarch at the same time," and exerted himself zealously as the *official* head of the Buddhist church; and that the years of the accession of Asoka and his father should be put back by a year, *i.e.* in B.C. 273 and 298.

countries. Two near relations of the Emperor, Mahinda (Sanskrit, Mahendra) and his sister Sanghamitta (Sanga-mitra), are said to have led the mission which converted Ceylon. As no mention of the council occurs in the inscriptions of the king yet discovered, some learned men doubt the truth of this legend. The story is, however, not improbable, as proofs of some of the missionaries mentioned by the legend have been discovered, and there also exists among the remains of the great stupa of Sanchi a remarkable picture, which seems to refer to this embassy to Ceylon (see frontispiece).

9. The emperor, though a firm believer in the Buddha himself, yet tolerated in a liberal spirit wide differences of opinion in religious matters. In some of his edicts he enjoins reverence and liberality to Brahmans, Jains, and to all ascetics as a general rule. In one of them it is expressly stated that "His Majesty King Piyadassi reverences men of all sects, whether ascetics or householders, by largesses and other modes of showing respect."

His religious toleration.

In the same edict he condemns men who would display their attachment to their own religion by disparaging those of others. Inscriptions of the king and his successor Dasaratha record donations even to an unpopular sect of the times (known as the Ájívakas).[1]

10. The great emperor is the most memorable figure in the history of India before the time of Akbar. Few Indian kings have had such an exalted sense of duty as Asoka had, and he apparently was still not fully satisfied with his unselfish devotion to the cause of his people. "I am never fully satisfied," says he, in one of his edicts, "with my exertions and my despatch of business. Work I must, for the public benefit; and the root of the matter is in exertion and despatch of business, than

His greatness as a ruler.

[1] *Vide* note at the end of the chapter.

which nothing is more efficacious for the general welfare. And for what do I toil? For no other end than this, that I may discharge my debt to animate beings, and that while I make some happy in this world, they may, in the next, gain heaven."

Asoka's work did not stop with good intentions. From his capital at Pataliputra he struck at oppression wherever he found it, and saw that his commands were enforced in the remotest parts of his dominions. As the poorest of his subjects were not beneath the king's notice, so the highest officials in the state, and even the members of the royal family were not safe from his censure and from punishment when they went wrong. He was able to keep peace within his extensive and diversified empire for nearly half a century. He safeguarded his frontiers from violation during a long reign without once drawing the sword to protect them. By liberal treatment of the backward races subject to his rule, he ensured their loyalty and restrained their turbulence. With unlimited power at his disposal, and placed when still young at the head of an immense military force, he entered with reluctance upon the only war of his reign, and after victory had the wisdom and moderation to sheath his sword and devote his life to the victories of peace. Such work would be ample proof of greatness in any king in any age. It is all the more marvellous that such praise should have been deserved by one who lived more than twenty-one centuries ago. The more one studies the life and work of this great emperor, the more is he tempted to recognize in him a kindred spirit to Akbar, and to that which animates British rule in India.

NOTE.

This brief account of Asoka and the general principles of his government will show that, from many points of view, he offers a

fitting parallel to two other sovereigns who succeeded him long after, at different periods and under different circumstances—viz. the Emperor Akbar and the Empress Victoria. It is remarkable that, whether we consider the extent of their empires, their high ideas of regal duty, or the ideals and modes of their government, the similarity between the three rulers should appear so striking; while it becomes singularly interesting and instructive when we remember that religious toleration was proclaimed and enforced by all the three. The reader might compare the wise words of Asoka quoted above with the following passage from the Proclamation of 1858 :—

"Firmly relying Ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, We disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose Our convictions on any of Our subjects."

SECTION II

Social Conditions under the Early Mauryas

11. The glimpses we obtain of the social and political life of Northern India under the early Mauryas show that the people had then reached a high degree of civilization, and that they were under the rule of a centralized, absolute monarchy. The affairs of government were personally supervised by the king, who, as in the case of Chandragupta and Asoka, devoted the best part of the day to the task of administration. A large body of graded officials, ranging from viceroys of great provinces down to the petty heads of villages, carried out the king's will. Their actions were privately watched and regularly reported to the king by a special body of spies and news writers (*prativedaka*), and cases of disloyalty or oppression sooner or later reached the ears of the distant ruler at Pataliputra, who took prompt action on them. Taxila, Ujjain, Girinagara (Girnar), Suvarnagiri, and Tosali formed provincial capitals where viceroys, often selected from princes of the

The machinery of Government.

blood, ruled on behalf of the king. The guardianship of the frontiers was entrusted to a special body of wardens of the marches.

The king.

12. The king lived in great splendour, but apparently also in fear of treachery. He was surrounded by a numerous bodyguard of armed women and men, and, though accessible at stated hours to petitioners, lived usually in seclusion, and was carefully guarded whenever he appeared in public. In the time of Chandragupta, it was a capital offence for a subject to trespass within the royal enclosure during the king's hunting expeditions.

The State and people.

13. The State interfered with the private life of the subjects to a degree which would now be regarded as intolerable. All the actions of people were spied on and reported by informers, during the time of Chandragupta. During the reign of Asoka, censors were appointed, in addition, to watch the lives of people, and to punish breaches of moral as of civil law; and after the king became a warm Buddhist, he prohibited the slaughter of animals on certain days, and the censors had to see that these injunctions were not violated.

The army.

14. The mainstay of Chandragupta's power was the army, to which, consequently, much attention was paid. In his days the standing forces of the empire comprised, as we saw, the huge number of 600,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, and 9000 elephants, besides chariots, the transport corps, and the fleet. That this immense array was needed even in times of peace is evident from the statement of Greek writers, who mention similar large armies as maintained even by some of the vassals of the Mauryan empire (*e.g.* the Kalingas and the Andhras). Special attention was paid to the arming and equipment of this great force, and military affairs were administered by a Board of thirty members. From Greek accounts

it appears that the army of Magadha was especially strong in its cavalry and its corps of war-elephants, on which it depended for victory in battle. The foot-soldiers were armed with long bows, double-edged swords, and large shields of oxhide; while the cavalry-men carried lances, in addition to short swords and bucklers. The war-chariots were drawn by oxen. During war, husbandmen were, as far as possible, left unmolested.[1]

15. The civil administration was carried on by an elaborate machinery of officials. Taxes were levied both in money and in kind, and were collected by the local officers. The land-tax formed then, as now, the chief item of revenue. Besides, the State received a considerable income from taxes on commerce and traffic (market-dues, tithes of sale-proceeds, tolls, and ferry dues), the royalties on mines and fisheries, the income of the State domain and forests, excise-duties, fines, and profession taxes.[2]

Revenues of the State.

16. In return the State assisted cultivation and trade by minute attention to irrigation works and roads, the provision of ferries and bridges over rivers, and the construction of rest-houses for travellers. Trunk roads branched from Pataliputra. In the capital a municipal commission supervised industry and commerce, watched over and cared for aliens, attended to the health of people, registered births and deaths, and collected the State dues. Similar bodies apparently conducted the government of provincial cities also. During the reign of Asoka, popular assemblies were convoked in the provincial capitals once every three or five years, and

Public works.

City government.

Provincial assemblies.

[1] This is the statement of Megasthenes. Asoka, however, refers to the slaughter of defenceless people during his war with Kalinga.

[2] Chanakya even mentions "benevolences" or "free-will gifts" levied from rich people.

the royal edicts and charters were read out to the people during their sittings.

Justice and crime.

17. The criminal law was administered by the judges and magistrates, who followed a settled procedure in deciding cases. Megasthenes bears witness to the quiet and law-abiding habits of the people, and to the rarity of serious crime in the country. Greek writers also refer to the severity of the penal law, which prescribed death and mutilation for even ordinary offences like giving false evidence, evasion of taxes, and causing hurt to workmen. In Asoka's time breaches of moral laws, and disobedience of the king's prohibition of the slaughter of animals, were added to the list of crimes. But the humane king tried at the same time to temper the severity of the other laws by appointing censors, who were authorized to grant redress to persons unjustly condemned to whipping and imprisonment, and pardons and remissions of punishments to those deserving such leniency. Offenders from the wild tribes were also treated less severely than criminals.

Caste and occupations.

18. We learn from Megasthenes that the Indians of his day were divided into castes, and that caste rules were fairly rigid and exclusive. All the chief occupations of an advanced industrial society existed, and were closely supervised and controlled by the State. The people, as a whole, appear to have lived contentedly. "They live happily enough," says Megasthenes, "being simple in their manners and frugal. They never drink wine except at sacrifices. Their houses and property they generally leave unguarded." Slavery was prevalent, but slaves appear to have been treated with kindness. Agriculture was generally prosperous, on account of the periodical rains and careful irrigation of the soil. But famines, though rare, were not unknown.[1]

General prosperity.

[1] Jain traditions mention a great famine at Magadha during the

19. Megasthenes also describes the Indians of his day as well skilled in the arts. "They love finery and ornament. Their robes are worked in gold and ornamented with precious stones, and they also wear flowered garments made of the finest muslin." This description is borne out by the sculptures at Sanchi, as well as by the references in Buddhist works. The dress of the men and women was simple enough, consisting, as at the present day, of a fine cloth tied round the loins, with occasionally another to cover the body. The ornaments and head-dress of men and women were, however, the richer for this simplicity of costume. The jeweller's art especially was highly advanced. The polished edict-pillars of stone raised by Asoka testify to the high degree of skill attained by the stone-workers of his time, and the perfection of their tools; while their presence in places where the kinds of stone from which they have been hewn are not available shows how skilfully the builders and engineers of Asoka overcame the difficulties in the way of transporting heavy masses over long distances.

Costume.

Art and architecture.

20. The conversion of Asoka made Buddhism pre-eminent over its rivals. In later times he alone was believed to have erected, for the glory of the Buddhist Church, as many as 84,000 buildings and monuments. Some of these struck popular imagination so forcibly as to induce the belief that they were built for the emperor by spirits and demons. Brahmanism also revived silently through the tolerant policy of Asoka and his successors. Its spread was much helped by the gradual diffusion of Sanskrit, a refined and literary form of the vernaculars,

Religious changes.

time of Chandragupta, when a large body of Jains were obliged to emigrate to South India. They even add that the Emperor Chandragupta (the Maurya) died a Jain in the province now called Mysore (see Mr. Lewis Rice's "Mysore from the Inscriptions").

which had found as early as the fourth century B.C. its most eminent grammarian, Panini.[1] The spread of Jainism was slower. It appealed mostly to the trading classes and castes. But the common people believed then, as now, in a number of petty gods and spirits, and practised various superstitious rites.[2] The more refined ideas of the rival sects and religions were above them. Consequently, in course of time Buddhism and Brahmanism, in the effort to gain the masses, borrowed many of the popular superstitions and made them part of their tenets. A tendency was thus set for a lowering in the tone of these religions, as well as for the growth of many points of likeness between their ceremonies and practices.

[1] He was a native of Salatura, near Takshasila, and is generally held to have lived about B.C. 350. His famous work was entitled the "Eight Chapters" (*i.e.* of Grammatical aphorisms)—*ashtadhyayi*.

[2] Asoka enumerates with aversion a number of these rites in his Rock-edict IX.

CHAPTER VII

Northern India, B.C. 232 to A.D. 300

SECTION I

Political History of the Period

1. The great Mauryan empire broke up soon after the death of Asoka. The genius of the Emperor had alone kept it from the disruption that naturally threatened dominions so loosely knit and forming such diverse units.[1]

The decline of the Mauryan empire.

The north-west frontier was first rendered unsafe by the rise, about B.C. 250, of two new states, Bactria (Balkh) and Parthia (Khorasan, Samarkhand, and the South Caspian coast), on the ruins of the empire of Seleucus. Within a quarter of a century of the death of Asoka, Antiochus, king of Syria (B.C. 223–167), a descendant of Seleucus, invaded first Bactria and then the Kabul valley. His march was imitated by his son-in-law Demetrius, a Bactrian, who extended his conquests over Kabul and the greater

The Indo-Bactrians.

[1] Among the other causes of the decline of the Mauryan empire may be mentioned the uncentral nature of its capital, the presence of half-conquered states (like Kalinga and Andhra) within it, the revival of Brahmanism, and the growing rivalry between it and Buddhism. The excessive centralization of power at the hands of the king at Pataliputra, which had been introduced by Chandragupta and Asoka, was another cause, as such authority was certain of misuse when weak or incapable rulers succeeded to the throne.

part of the Panjab and Sindh (about B.C. 190). The lands thus taken from the Mauryan empire fell to a



ANCIENT BUDDHIST TOWER AT SARNATH.

number of petty Græco-Bactrian chiefs. The most conspicuous among these was Menander (about B.C. 150), a powerful and just ruler, with some leaning to Buddhism. His capital was first Kabul and then Sagala (Sialkot). He made himself master of Kabul, the valley of the Indus (to its mouths), and Kathiawar, and raided Mathura (Muttra), Sákèta (Oudh), and part of Rajputana.

Menander.

2. While the western and north-western possessions of the Mauryans thus crumbled away, their possessions in the south and south-east were also lost. The Andhras, who had been a formidable power even in the days of Chandragupta and Asoka, made themselves independent in the Dakhan about 225 B.C. A little later Kalinga, which Asoka had conquered after so much bloodshed, freed itself from the Mauryan yoke and, under its vigorous Jain ruler, Kharavela, attacked the Magadhan dominions from the south-east.

The Andhras.

King Kharavela of Kalinga.

3. It was thus a sadly diminished heritage that was



A COIN OF MENANDER.

left for the weak successors of Asoka. It was limited to the provinces now known as Tirhut, Bihar, the United Provinces, and Malwa. Over these the later Mauryas ruled till about B.C. 185, when their throne was usurped by an ambitious general named Pushyamitra, who founded a dynasty of princes known as the Sungas. During a long reign of about thirty-five years the usurper fought successfully against the enemies by whom Magadha was now surrounded. Though not a persecutor of Buddhism, Pushyamitra began a Brahman reaction against it, and celebrated the long intermitted horse-sacrifice. After his death the dynasty degenerated till its last kings were mere puppets in the hands of their ministers. About B.C. 72, one of these ministers, a

The later Mauryas and the Sungas.

Brahman of the Kanva family, killed the last Sunga and founded a short-lived dynasty, the last member of which was conquered and slain a generation before the Christian era by a king of the Andhra dynasty, which had become supreme in the Dakhan.

The Kanvas.

4. While decay was thus setting in in the body of the old empire of Magadha, rapid changes were taking place in the countries lying on the north-west frontier. Under an able ruler named Mithradates I. (174–136 B.C.), the Parthian (Persian) kingdom had attained great power. While Menander was engaged in his Indian conquests, the Bactrian principality was overthrown by a horde of Mongolian nomads known in Indian history as the Sakas, who were expelled from their homes on the upper Jaxartes (Syr Daria) by a second horde known in history as the Yue-chi, and compelled to seek new homes (about B.C. 160). These invaders soon crossed the Hindu Kush and poured into Afghanistan (where they occupied the Helmund valley, since then known as Seistan, Sakasthana, "the abode of the Sakas"), and also penetrated into India, where chiefs of Saka origin founded settlements at Takshasila (Taxila), Mathura (Muttra), and Surashtra (Kathiawar). As these rulers bore the Parthian (Persian) title of Satrap (Kshatrapa), it is inferred that they owed some kind of fealty to the great Parthian kings of the time. Princes of pure Parthian lineage bearing Parthian names appear also to have ruled on the north-west for above a century before the Christian era[1] (from about B.C. 120). The most notable of them was Gondophares, in whose time, according to a very old tradition, the religion of Jesus Christ was brought to India by the Apostle Thomas.

The Sakas.

Indo-Parthians.

[1] Other bodies of Parthians or Pahlavas (Pallavas) appear also about the time to have found their way into the Dakhan, and thence into South India.

5. The irruption of a new and mighty body of invaders from Central Asia put an end, about 50 B.C., to these small kingdoms. The great Yue-chi horde, which about B.C. 160 had, as we saw, driven the Sakas from their homes on the Jaxartes (Syr Daria), was itself driven further south into Bactria within a generation of its settlement in the original Saka territories. Within a century it made rapid progress in the arts of life, lost its wandering nature, and become a powerful and settled nation, divided into five kindred tribes, each ruled by a different family. Half a century after the Christian era, a Yue-chi chief, known in history as Kadphises I., who was the head of one of these tribes (called the Kusanas), made himself supreme over his rivals, and led his massed forces

The Yue-chis.

The Kusana empire.



A Coin of Kadphises I.

over the Hindu Kush and conquered, within a long reign of nearly forty years, the lands lying between Bokhara and Baluchistan and the Indus and the Persian frontier. The small Indo-Bactrian and Indo-Parthian powers of the north-west were destroyed by his conquests. About 85 A.D. he was succeeded by another Kadphises ("the second"), who during an equally long reign spread his power over all Northern India, as far south as Sindh, as far east as Benares. The frontiers of three great empires—those of China, Parthia, and Rome—approached the limits of his dominions. The disappearance of a host of small chiefships before these mighty empires without doubt

removed the barriers which had, after the death of Asoka and Seleucus, restrained trade and the exchange of ideas between the East and the West. Commerce revived, and with it came a revival of Indian art under Græco-Roman influence. All these added to the



A Coin of Kadphises II.

wealth and greatness of the second Kadphises, who left at his death (A.D. 125) a flourishing empire to his still more famous successor Kanishka.

Kanishka.

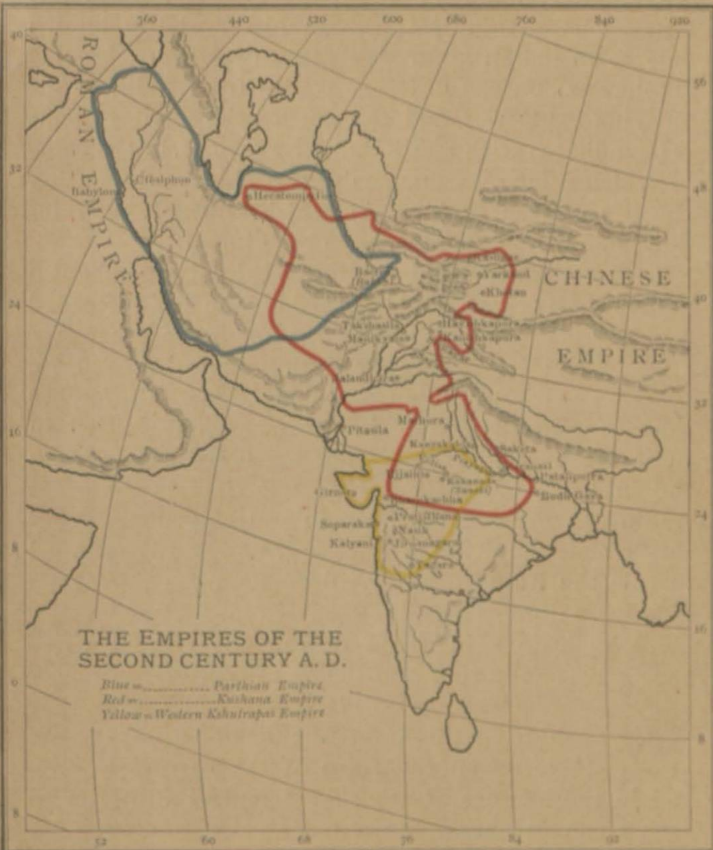
6. The name of Kanishka (125–153 A.D.) is the most celebrated in Buddhist annals after that of Asoka, and in the countries to the North of India where Buddhism prevails, the names of the two emperors are coupled together as great benefactors to the religion. A great Buddhist Council was held



A Coin of Kanishka.

during his reign (in Kashmir or in the Jalandhar doab) to consider the main doctrines of the northern form of Buddhism (known as *Mahâyâna*, or the Great Vehicle) which encouraged the practice of worshipping the

Buddha as the Deity. But even apart from his services to Buddhism, Kanishka had greatness enough to be remembered in history.



THE EMPIRES OF THE SECOND CENTURY A. D.

Blue = ... *Parthian Empire*
Red = ... *Kushana Empire*
Yellow = *Western Kshatrapas Empire*

7. In India he extended his conquests into Kashmir, and as far east as Pataliputra. He made a successful war against the Parthians, whose frontiers adjoined his own, as well as against the Chinese empire, from

which he won the provinces of Yarkhand, Khotan, and Kashgar. His empire extended from Bokhara to Sindh, from Persia to Bihar. Thus Kanishka's dominions outside the limits of India were vaster than his possessions within it. Still, in history he is known only as an Indian king. His capital was *Purushapura* (Peshawar), on the different routes from India to his outlying territories, and he enriched the country about it (Gandhara) with many Buddhist shrines, in the ruins of which numerous fine sculptures, chiefly illustrating the life of the Buddha, in which Græco-Roman influence is quite apparent, have been found.[1]

His successors.

8. The reign of Kanishka extended only for about a quarter of a century. About 153 A.D. he was succeeded by Huvishka, who was followed after nearly thirty years by a king named Vásudeva, whose Indian name suggests the inference that the Kusana kings had become naturalized in India. The reign of this ruler apparently came to an end in A.D. 226, at about the same time as the great Andhra dynasty of the Dakhan and Magadha. Petty chiefs claiming Kusana ancestry, however, continued to rule the Kabul country till the fifth century, when they were uprooted by the Huns.

Return of anarchy.

9. The history of India during the two or three generations following the death of Vasudeva is now almost a blank. It is certain, however, that during this interval numerous petty chiefs arose on the ruins of the Kusana empire, and in the absence of any strong central authority to keep them in check, the old confusion and anarchy spread again within the country; while the frontiers were left unguarded. Better days were, however, in

[1] One of these—a large stupa—was recently excavated, and was found to contain a casket with the relics of the Buddha. These relics are now preserved in Burma, the only Buddhist province of the Indian Empire.

store for the land, as by the beginning of the fourth century A.D. a small power was coming into prominence in Magadha, which was destined to revive the glories of the earlier Indian empires.

SECTION II

Social Conditions of the Period

Decline of Buddhism and rise of Brahmanism.

10. The long period intervening between the fall of the Mauryan empire and the foundation of the Gupta kingdom was an eventful one in the history of Indian religion, art, and literature. With the fall of the Mauryan dynasty a strong Brahmanic and Jain revival took place. Pushyamitra celebrated, as we saw, the Vedic horse sacrifice. About the same time, Kharavela, king of Kalinga, showered benefactions on the Jain monastic orders. Buddhism, however, did not lose ground, as it gained the adhesion of many of the superstitious foreigners (the Sakas, the Yue-chis, and the Pahlavas) who now flocked into India.[1] But in its efforts to adapt its doctrines and practices to these unrefined invaders, it lost its purity by embodying many popular rites and ceremonies, including idol-worship. This new and grosser Buddhism reached its zenith during the reign of Kanishka, when its principles were affirmed in the great religious assembly held under his patronage.[2]

11. The revival of Sanskrit kept pace with that of

[1] Some of these foreigners, *e.g.* Kadphises II. and Vasudeva, of the Kusana dynasty, the Satrap Rudradaman, and the Pahlava Sivaskandavarman, were, however, patrons of Brahmanism.

[2] A Buddhist sage, named Asvaghosha, is reputed to have influenced Kanishka in favour of the new Buddhism.

Brahmanism. The work of Panini was continued by other grammarians, among whom Patanjali was the greatest. Sanskrit gradually displaced the Prakrits as the language of the cultured, amongst the Buddhists, as among the Brahmans, and Buddhist writers, like Asvaghosha, composed works in it. Even inscriptions began to be composed in Sanskrit.[1]

Revival of Sanskrit

The rivalry between the sects promoted activity in religious and philosophical thought. The old systems of Indian philosophy were amplified and developed. In the field of conduct, the Brahman ideals of civil and moral law were collected in a celebrated code (*dharma-sastra*), to which the name of the heroic law-giver Manu was given. Secular literature (stories, poetry, and the drama) also receive considerable additions, and the poets Hala, Bhasa, and Sudraka may be ascribed to this period.[2] In medicine remarkable progress was made, and standard treatises were published by Charaka, the physician of Kanishka, and Susruta, a celebrated surgeon who lived about the time.

and Sanskrit literature.

12. The first two centuries of the Christian era saw considerable activity in architecture and sculpture throughout Hindustan and the Dakhan. This was due to the zeal of rival sectaries. In the Panjab and the regions to its north-west (*i.e.* Gandhara), Græco-Bactrian artists erected numerous *stupas* and shrines and enriched them with beautiful sculptures—the finest that ancient India has to show. Purely native schools of architects and sculptors made the *stupas* and cave temples of Central India and the Dakhan respectively. The foreign

Architecture and sculpture.

[1] The earliest known example of such an inscription is that of the great Satrap Rudradaman at Girnar (A.D. 150).

[2] Sudraka was the author of the celebrated play, "The Little Clay Cart" (*Mricchakati*).

influence was felt even in coinage, and a famous type of coins modelled on those of the Roman empire, which was advancing towards Babylon at the time, was introduced into India during the reigns of the Kusana emperors, and was copied by their successors.

CHAPTER VIII

North India, A.D. 300–650

SECTION I

Political History of the Period

Rise of the Guptas—Chandragupta I.

1. Order and peace were brought again into the country at the beginning of the fourth century A.D. by the rise of a fresh kingdom in Hindustan. The founders of the new power are known in history as the Guptas. The first notable man of the family was a Chandragupta,[1] who made himself master of Pataliputra and the districts about it. In this he was assisted by the influence of his wife, a princess of the ancient and famous tribe of the Licchavis. He conquered before his death (A.D. 326) the districts now called Bihar, Tirhut, and Oudh. He also founded, in A.D. 320, a new era, perhaps in commemoration of his assumption of regal titles.

Samudragupta (A.D. 326–375).

2. He was followed on the throne by his son Samudragupta (A.D. 326–375), the most eminent member of the dynasty. We now possess a fairly long description of this king's achievements and virtues in a poetical Sanskrit inscription, incised by his command upon one of Asoka's edict pillars. It appears from this and other accounts

[1] To be distinguished from the great Mauryan emperor of the same name, and also from Chandragupta II., Vikramaditya.

that he was a great and successful warrior, and was, besides, a cultured patron of art and letters. Within a few years of his accession he led a wonderful expedition of conquest, lasting for nearly three years, during which he overcame above a score of kings (who are named), both in Hindustan and the Dakhan, besides numerous unspecified forest tribes, border principalities, and peoples. After conquering the Gangetic plain, and extending his power as far south as the Chambal, he appears to have penetrated through the difficult region of Chota Nagpur into the Central Provinces (then forming the kingdom of South Kosala). After overcoming the

His conquests.

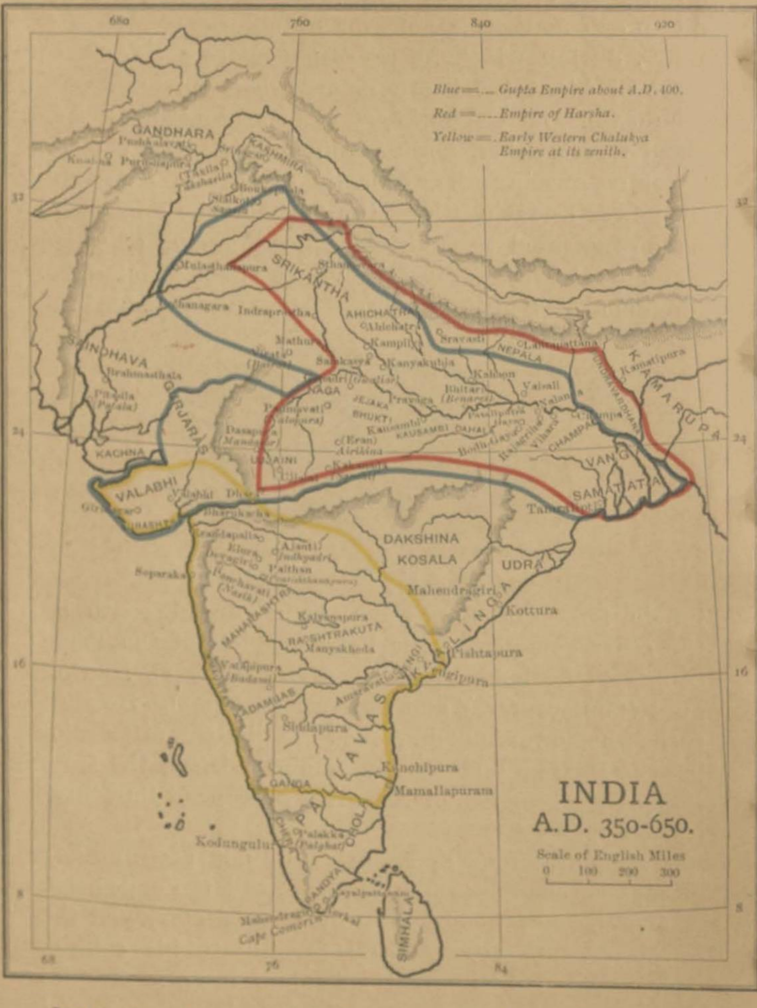


A Coin of Samudragupta.

jungle tribes of Gondwana, he advanced south by the coast, conquering the Pallava chiefs of the Vengi country (the land about the Krishna river), Kanchipura (Conjeeveram), and Palakka (Palghat). He then turned homewards and reached Pataliputra, after raiding the Dakhan and Khandesh, and skirting the frontiers of the kingdom of the great Satraps of Surashtra (Gujarat).

3. Samudragupta apparently did not attempt any permanent conquests in the south, and the expedition was probably impelled only by love of glory and the prospect of booty. After returning to his capital, he celebrated with great splendour a horse-sacrifice (*Aswamedha*), in commemoration of his victories, and in proof of his paramount position over other Indian

kings. He then reigned gloriously for the remainder of a long reign of nearly half a century. During his



last years he associated with himself in the work of government his favourite son, Chandragupta II., by

whom he was quietly succeeded at his death, about A.D. 375.

4. Samudragupta was thus one of the most powerful rulers and conquerors of India. His celebrated raid had no parallel till the fourteenth century, when Malik Kafur led a similar marauding expedition over almost the same regions as were covered by the Hindu conqueror.

His power and greatness.

At the time of his death, the territories directly under Samudragupta embraced the regions between the Himalayas on the north and the Narbada on the south, and the Bhagirathi on the east, and the Jumna and the Chambal on the west. Outside these boundaries stood tributary principalities like Samatata, Vanga, and Kamarupa, and protected tribes like the Yaudheya confederation, and the Malavas.[1]

Even foreign rulers like the kings of Kabul and Ceylon were impressed by his power and wealth, and kept up friendly relations with him. Literature and music flourished at his court, and the king himself was proud of his own skill in music and poetry. During his long reign the country was so well administered that we do not hear of any wars or rebellions within it, and the peace and security enjoyed by his subjects won the praise of the Chinese traveller Fa-Hian, who visited India during the next reign.[2]

5. Chandragupta II. should have been of mature age when he succeeded his father, and like him he reigned long and gloriously (A.D. 375–413). He too was a conqueror and a man of letters. He put down a rebellion in Bengal, and claims to have crossed, in another expedition, "the seven mouths of the Indus." But the great event of

Chandragupta II.—Vikramaditya (A.D. 375-413).

[1] For the position of these, see Map VII.

[2] The Guptas minted gold coins on a large scale, some of which are considered "the finest examples of Indian (minting) art." Note the coin of Samudragupta where he is represented playing the *vina*.

his reign was the conquest (A.D. 395) of the kingdom of the great Satraps of the West, who ruled over Malwa, Gujarat, and Kathiawar.[1] He then assumed the title of Vikramaditya, "a Sun in prowess," and was probably the original of the celebrated Vikramaditya of Indian legend. The conquest of the Satrap dominions rounded the Gupta empire on the west, and gave it an opening to the sea, and a share of the sea-borne trade with the West. Ujjain, the Satrap capital, became the seat of Chandragupta, and won undying renown in Indian literature from the gifted men who adorned his court.

Conquests of the Satraps of Malwa.



A Coin of Vikramaditya.

6. The prosperity of the Guptas reached its zenith during the reign of Chandragupta II. After his death weakness and decay crept into the empire. The reigns of his son and grandson, Kumaragupta I. and Skandagupta, lasted together for above two-thirds of a century (A.D. 413–480), but during the period the kingdom, instead of gaining stability, steadily lost it. The Huns, a half-civilized nomadic race, generally believed to be of Mongul origin, who had within the previous century swarmed into Europe and spread desolation through it, now threatened India from the north-west. The small Kusana kingdom of Kabul collapsed before them. Between A.D. 450 and 460 the Gupta

His successors.

The Hun invasions.

[1] *Vide* Chapter X., para. 3.

sovereigns had to repulse small bodies of the invaders, which rushed into Hindustan in advance of the main hordes. Ten years later Skandagupta was forced to retire before larger bodies which overran the Panjab and the frontier districts. About the time of his death (A.D. 480) the great kingdom of Persia was shattered by another body of the Huns, who thus became supreme from the Volga to the Ganges.

7. The Huns destroyed the Gupta empire, but were unable to found in its place a lasting kingdom of their own. Ugly and barbarous, they came into the land as marauders, and remained such until they were expelled or destroyed a century later. Toramana (c. A.D. 490–510), one of their

Toramana and Mihiragula.



A Coin of Mihiragula.

chiefs, attempted to establish a form of settled government over the Panjab, Rajputana, and Central India. His son Mihiragula (c. A.D. 510–540) followed in his steps, and ruled in India for nearly a score of years. But his savage and inhuman cruelties provoked a desperate national rising against the Huns. The insurrection was led by Narasimhagupta, a descendant of the Gupta family, which still ruled with diminished strength and splendour in Magadha, and by his vassal, a Central India chief named Yasodharman. Through their exertions Mihiragula's power in India was broken

(A.D. 528), and he was forced to retire into Kashmir, where he died in A.D. 540.

The downfall of the Huns.

8. The retreat and death of Mihiragula were followed by a disaster affecting the whole body of Asiatic Huns. Between A.D. 563 and 567, a combination of the Persians and Turks destroyed the main body of the Huns on the Amu Daria. The small bodies of the invaders who still remained in India, being thus cut off from their support, were destroyed in detail by local Rajas, who obtained among their contemporaries a degree of fame and influence proportionate to their activity and success in ridding the country of the common enemy. One of these Rajas was Prabhakaravardhana, who by his victories against the Huns succeeded in founding, about the beginning of the seventh century A.D., a small kingdom named Srikantha, with its capital at Thanesar (Sthanesvara). He died in 605 A.D., and is remembered as the father of an eminent king named Harshavardhana (A.D. 606–648), who brought all Hindustan once again under a common government —for the last time, as it proved, in the annals of Hindu dynasties.

The dynasty of Thanesar.

The emperor Harsha (606-648).

9. Harshavardhana, or Harsha, as he is more generally known, ascended the throne at the early age of sixteen. Confusion and anarchy were then rife in the land, and his accession itself was one of their indirect results. Harsha's brother-in-law, the ruler of Kanauj, was slain in battle by an unscrupulous neighbour, and the widowed queen (Harsha's *younger* sister) renounced the world and fled to the Vindhyan jungles. His elder brother was treacherously killed by a pretended ally while returning from an expedition undertaken to avenge his sister's wrongs. Both these sad events had followed soon after the death of Harsha's father, who had been suddenly stricken with mortal illness. Harsha's mother also committed *sati*

on her husband's funeral pyre. A series of misfortunes thus unexpectedly opened the way to the throne to Harsha, who, as a younger son, could not in the natural course have hoped to succeed to the throne. The sorrows of the family, and the difficulties of the earlier years of his life, made a profound impression upon the young king's mind, and possibly gave his reign the serious turn which marked it.

10. Harsha commemorated his accession by founding a new era. He then rescued his sister, and avenged the wrongs of his family. The best part of the remainder of a long reign of forty-two years (A.D. 606-648) was devoted to the task of conquering Hindustan and keeping peace within it. By A.D. 620, his dominions embraced all the territories forming the heritage of Chandragupta II. at his accession, with the addition of Bengal and Nepal. His power was also acknowledged by the powerful rulers of Kamarupa (Assam) and Valabhi (Gujarat), who paid him tribute. The only military failure of his reign was the defeat he sustained on the lines of the Narbada at the hands of the great Chalukya, Pulakesin II., king of the Dakkan, whose dominions adjoined his own. Harsha's military resources are stated as consisting of 60,000 (?) war elephants and 100,000 cavalry. For the rest of his life (after his war with Pulakesin), Harsha was content to accept the Narbada as his southern boundary.

His wars.

His defeat by Pulakesin II.

11. During his last years Harsha enjoyed some respite from war. He then actively devoted himself to the arts of peace, and to various pious offices dictated by his religious feelings. His court became well known even in distant Buddhist countries, and he maintained friendly intercourse with the Chinese empire, and exchanged embassies with it. But the sad events of his earlier life, and the constant warfare in which he was engaged for nearly three-

His last years.

fourths of his reign, had evidently worn out even his hardy frame, and he died in A.D. 648, before reaching his sixtieth year.

His greatness.

12. Harsha was the last great Hindu king of Northern India. After his death his empire broke up. A Chinese pilgrim named Hiouen Thsang visited India during the reign of Harsha in search of Buddhist lore, and in the pursuit of his object made a fairly long stay in Harsha's dominions, and also travelled over almost every other important province of India. The pilgrim's account of his travels, which is now available, throws considerable light upon the life and work of Harsha. Bana, a Brahman courtier and poet, also recounts in the "Harshacharita" (history of Harsha) the events of Harsha's early life and reign. These records, and the inscriptions of the reign, show that Harsha was an exceptionally strong but tolerant ruler, and that he followed the policy of Asoka and the Gupta emperors, dividing his patronage between Brahmanism and Buddhism, and not seeking to force his religious views on his subjects. Personally, he seems to have had a marked leaning to Buddhism, apparently the result of his early trials and sorrows. Like Asoka, he was tireless in the despatch of business, and was always moving through his empire, watching the working of his servants. He was an accomplished man of letters, delighted in the society of learned men and poets, and was a very liberal but discerning patron —so much so, that his name is remembered even more for his literary work and patronage than for his achievements as a king.

NOTE.

We gather from Hiouen Thsang some additional facts regarding the political conditions of Hindustan at the time of his visit (about

A.D. 635). Kashmir and the Salt range formed a single kingdom, while the Panjab itself, with Multan, formed another, and Sind made a third. Ujjain, Upper Bengal, and Assam were ruled by their own kings, who were vassals of Harsha. Kalinga, which had been so powerful and densely peopled in the days of Asoka and Kharavela, was overrun with jungle and almost deserted.

SECTION II

Social Conditions of the Period

13. We may now attempt a brief general description of the condition of the people in Hindustan during the period covered in the last section (A.D. 300–650). For this our chief authorities are the accounts left by two shrewd Chinese observers, Fa-Hian and Hiouen Thsang (who respectively visited India during the reigns of Chandragupta II. and Harsha), besides the Sanskrit inscriptions and literature of the period.

Sources of information.

14. The most notable movement of the age was the gradual displacement of Buddhism by a modified form of Brahmanism, which has since become known by the name of Hinduism. We saw how, about the beginning of the Christian era, both religions attempted to win the support of the masses by adopting as distinctive features of their respective creeds many of the popular beliefs and practices, such as faith in many petty gods and goddesses, the worship of idols and grand religious processions and ceremonies. In this adoption of the beliefs of the common people, Buddhism apparently set the *first* example, but was soon followed by Brahmanism, which went even further in the same direction. The latter absorbed not merely the

Decline of Buddhism and rise of Hinduism.

superstitions of the masses adopting their practices, but it also quietly assimilated much of what was noble or popular in Buddhist teachings.[1] This ensured its ultimate victory over Buddhism. Further, it was greatly assisted by its willingness to receive within its fold as Kshatriyas (nobles), foreign or low-born dynasties, like the Kusanas, the Guptas, and the Huns, who therefore became its generous patrons. Under these influences, Hinduism set about the systematic exposition of its doctrines and ideals in an extensive religious and social literature, to which belong the great books of religious and social tradition called the Puranas, and the *versified* law-books.[2]

Its causes.

15. The works of the Chinese pilgrims and the inscriptions of the time bear witness to this rapid decline of Buddhism and the rise of Hinduism *through the operation of natural causes.*[3] Three at least of the Guptas are known to have performed the horse-sacrifice, and three of them took pride in calling themselves firm devotees of Vishnu (*Paramabhágavata*). When Fa-hian visited India (399–411) he found Brahmanism almost as influential as Buddhism. But already the towns in the Buddhist holy land (Srasvasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara, and Gaya) were almost deserted and in ruins. The inscriptions of the Gupta period frequently refer to the

[1] Among these may be mentioned organized missionary activity for the spread of Hinduism among the backward tribes, multiplication of temples and processions, and the encouragement of the vernaculars for religious purposes.

[2] The Puranas are usually stated as eighteen in number. Some of them were very old even at the Gupta period, but they were then recast and rewritten, along with the others.

[3] The Hun ruler Mihiragula and Sasanka, king of Bengal (A.D. 600–620), persecuted the Buddhists; but their persecutions were exceptional, and we do not hear of any other rulers molesting Buddhism.

building of temples dedicated to Hindu divinities,[1] the erection of sacrificial stakes (*Yupa*), the establishment of almshouses for feeding Brahmans (*satra*), and grants of villages for the performance of Vedic rites. When Hiouen Thsang visited Hindustan Buddhism was already decadent, and many of its chief monuments were in ruins, in spite of the patronage which Harsha lavished on its followers.

Law and administration.

16. As the natural result of the Hindu revival, the ideals of law and administration followed during the epoch were necessarily based upon the *Code of Manu.* Caste rules had become rigid, and occupations followed caste. Civil rights were carefully guarded by minute rules of law regarding inheritance, contracts, gifts, purchase and sale, and domestic relations. Procedure and evidence in courts of law were regulated by definite provisions. The criminal law, however, was defective, in so far as it was governed by considerations of the offender's caste and social position, and no attempt was made to distinguish between *sin* and *crime*. The usual punishments were fines, whipping, maiming, banishment, and death. Imprisonment was not usual, especially for long terms. Serious crime would appear to have been rare during the best days of the Gupta rule, and travellers could freely move about without fear of robbery.

General condition of the country.

17. On all these matters and on the general flourishing condition of the country the testimony of Fa-Hian is decisive. He also bears witness to the sober habits of the mass of the people, and to their *active* charity, especially in endowing free hospitals for man and beast. This happy state

[1] Vishnu, Siva, Skanda or Mahasena, and the Sun (Surya or Aditya) appear to have been the most popular among the Hindu gods, while among goddesses Durga or Káli, the dread consort of Siva, received the most attention.

of things, however, ended with the irruption of the Huns, and the anarchy and bloodshed following the invasion were so great that, even under the strenuous rule of Harsha, North India failed to regain fully the old peace. Many old cities like Takshasila, Pataliputra, and Rajagriha were deserted or in ruins during Harsha's reign, and the general insecurity of life and property during his times is conspicuously illustrated by the sufferings of his own family, as well as by the attempts which, according to Hiouen Thsang, were made on the life of the emperor by some of his subjects, even after he had been many years on the throne.

18. The epoch under review was the most productive age of Sanskrit poetry and learning. That this was so was chiefly due to the liberality and taste shown by the Gupta emperors, and later on by Harshavardhana, in the patronage of literature and scholarship. The universal tradition which assigns many of the greatest poets and men of science in India to the age of the legendary Vikramaditya only reflects the impression made on contemporaries and on posterity by the brilliant literary court of Chandragupta II. (Vikramaditya). Kálidása, easily the first among classical Sanskrit poets, is now believed to have composed his dramas and poems in the court of Chandragupta II. or his successor.[1] During the same period, and the centuries intervening between it and the death of Harsha, lived some other famous men. Among these may be mentioned the lexicographer Amarasimha; the physician Dhanvantari; the jurist Yágnavalkya; the great astronomers Aryabhata, Brahmagupta, and Varahamihira; the romancers Subandhu (author of "Vasavadatta") and Dandin (author of "Dasakumaracharita"); the grammarians Vamana and Jayaditya (authors of "Kasika"); and the poets Bharavi (author of "Kirá-

Literature.

[1] The most popular works of Kalidasa are the epic poem "Raghuvamsa," the lyric "Meghaduta," and the play *Sakuntala*.

tárjuníya"), Pravarasena (a king of Kashmir who wrote "Setukavya," a Prakrit poem), Bhartrihari (the author of the "Three Centuries of Verse"), and Harsha (the emperor, who wrote two dramas). As much of what is best in classical Sanskrit was produced during this epoch, it is sometimes referred to by scholars and historians as the "*golden age*" of Sanskrit literature.

CHAPTER IX

SECTION I

POLITICAL HISTORY OF HINDUSTAN FROM A.D. 650 TO THE MUHAMMADAN CONQUEST

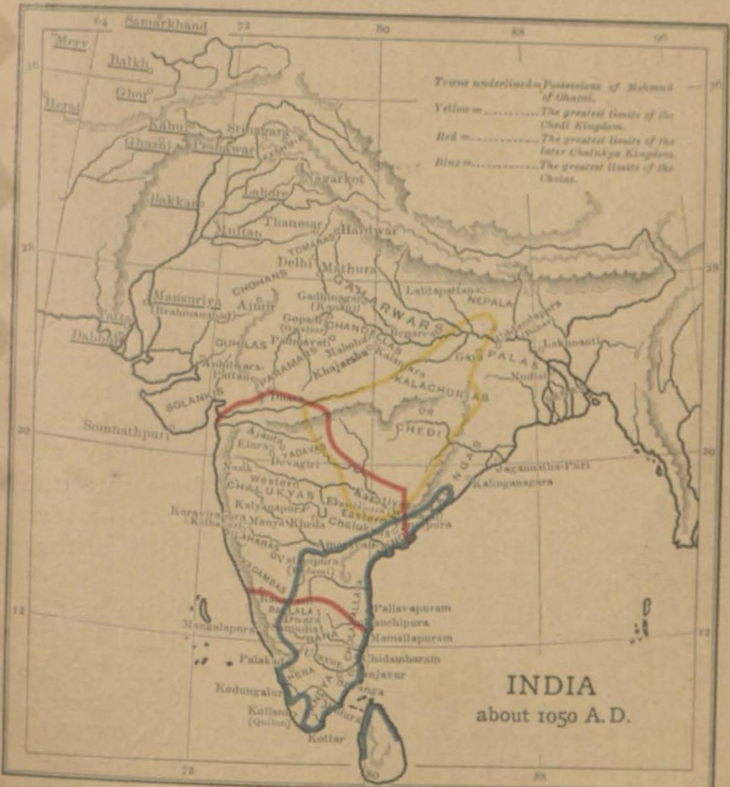
Effect of Harsha's death.

1. THE history of North India after the death of Harsha illustrates forcibly the instability of an empire founded and maintained *solely* by the genius of a *single* ruler, who does not create a *permanent* machinery which would keep together his dominions after his death. Harsha was apparently the last ruler of his house, and as he left no suitable successors, his empire did not outlast his life. The throne was seized by a minister who, by his cruelty to a Chinese embassy, provoked a war with China, and was eventually defeated and carried away a prisoner out of India by a Tibeto-Chinese army. The outlying provinces took advantage of the weakness of the central power to declare their independence. Valabhi (Gujarat) was the first to do so, and its rulers assumed Harsha's imperial titles. Kanauj and Nepal, which had been subject to Harsha, also set up as independent states, under their respective dynasties. Kashmir, Kabul, the Panjab and Sindh, which had stood outside the empire of Harsha, continued so, till they fell one by one before the Muhammadans. Thus, Bihar and Upper Bengal alone of all the extensive possessions of Harsha were left to the *second* Gupta dynasty, which

Break-up of his empire.

made its appearance in Magadha about A.D. 670. Its members ruled over the reduced territory for a century and a half, claiming to the last the old imperial rank and pretensions, in spite of their enfeebled power. We do not know the exact circumstances leading to the final disappearance of their house during the first quarter

The later Gupta dynasty—A.D. 670-c. 825.



INDIA
about 1050 A.D.

of the ninth century A.D., but what follows would appear to have been the probable course of events in Hindustan leading to and following their fall.

2. During the troubled years preceding and following the period of the supremacy of the first Gupta dynasty over Hindustan, many foreign races, like the Sakas, the Pahlavas, and the Huns, had found their way into India, had settled gradually in the country, and merged in the older native population, becoming Hindus in religion and manners. A new race was thus formed by this admixture, in which the warlike qualities of the sturdy peoples of Central Asia were united to a devotion to and pride in the Hindu religion and traditions. The chiefs of these new races claimed to be descended from the old Hindu gods and heroes (*e.g.* the Agnikulas), and, in slow course, they came to be recognized as such and as the Kshatriyas of modern times. The Hindu priests found in them the firmest upholders of Hinduism. The new chiefs and their followers called themselves *Rájputs* (*Rájaputras*, "princes"), and the history of Hindustan from the eighth century onward till the Muhammadan conquest is mainly the record of their unending feuds and rivalries.[1] This perpetual strife weakened the Rajput states, prevented their union, and led to their conquest *in detail* by the Muhammadans; but it also developed those rare and noble traits—valour, fidelity, and generosity—which have given to the Rajputs the first place in the history of Indian *chivalry*.

Rise of the Rajputs.

3. One of these half Hindu peoples, known as the Gúrjjaras, who had previously been settled in the Panjab, moved further south, and by the end of the eighth century conquered Eastern Rajputana and Malwa. By A.D. 950 the Gurjjara chiefs had conquered Kanauj, which had till then remained under a dynasty related to Harsha's family, and extended their power to the north of the

The Gurjjaras.

[1] All Rajputs are not of foreign origin. Aryanized aborigines and the descendants of old ruling houses also became Rajputs.

Ganges. The capital of the enlarged kingdom was accordingly changed from Ujjain, which was too far south, to Kanauj, and the Gurjjara rulers, who became known later on as *the Tomaras,*[1] assumed in token of their wide possessions the imperial titles. Their supremacy did not, however, last for many years. An unlucky war with the powerful Ráshtrakútas (Rahtors), who were then supreme in the Dakhan, was followed, during the first quarter of the tenth century, by the loss of several parts of the kingdom to other Rajput clans. The Chandellas, the Chohans, and the Parmars made themselves independent in Bandelkhand, Ajmir, and Malwa respectively. In the effort to regain their lost possessions, the Tomaras became still further weakened, till their kingdom fell *first* a prey to the Muhammadans (A.D. 1019), and then to the Gaharwar Rajputs, who conquered Kanauj and founded there a short-lived but very prosperous kingdom. The last possessions of the Tomaras, consisting only of the districts around Delhi, lingered in the family till they were also absorbed in the possessions of the Chohans of Ajmir, when the famous Prithviraj, a Chohan, acquired the Tomara dominions through his mother, a princess of Delhi.

The kingdom of Kanauj (Mahodaya) and Delhi, under the Tomaras.

4. The chief Rajput dynasties of North India come prominently into notice about the beginning of the ninth century A.D., at the time of the disappearance of the later Gupta dynasty of Magadha. Among these, the Chandellas possessed themselves of Bandelkhand, then called *Jejákabhukti*, while further south the country now forming the upper portion of the Central Provinces, then called *Chedi*, was occupied by the *Kaláchuryas*, or Kalachuris. The main possessions of the later

The chief Rajput States.

[1] Tradition ascribes the foundation of Delhi to the first Tomara ruler, Anangapala (about 736 A.D.).

Guptas, viz. Bihar and Bengal, fell to the lot of a dynasty of kings, known in history as the *Palas*, from the usual termination of their names.[1] They were almost the last patrons of Buddhism in India. Upper Rajputana and Ajmir were under the Chohans, while Malwa was ruled by the Paramaras. Kanauj remained first under the Tomaras and then passed, as we saw, under the Gaharwars, who had once been powerful in Bandelkhand before the advent of the Chandellas. As was natural in principalities so placed without any effective natural boundaries separating their respective possessions, each of these states was frequently at war with its neighbours. The history of Northern India during the next four centuries, *i.e.* till the Muhammadan conquest, is consequently the history of a constant and perplexing struggle for supremacy between these small but ambitious and warlike states.

The Chandellas' kingdom.

5. The Chandella capital was Mahoba, and Kalinjar (Kalanjara) was one of their great fortresses. They were great builders, and the many splendid temples and irrigation works with whose remains Bandelkhand abounds, were constructed by them. The most eminent members of the dynasty were Dhanga, who ruled throughout the whole of the second half of the tenth century, and Kirtivarman (about 1060 A.D.). The former joined the Northern league formed to resist the Muhammadan invaders from Ghazni, and the latter overthrew Karna, the powerful ruler of Chedi. His successors lost heavily in the wars with their neighbours, and in their weakened state fell an easy prey to the Muhammadans towards the end of the twelfth century. In 1203, Kalinjar, the last stronghold of the Chandellas, surrendered to the Muhammadans, and from that date

[1] The termination Pala is common in other dynasties also, *e.g.* the Brahman line of Ohind and Lahore, and the Tomaras of Delhi.

the Chandellas disappear from history as an independent power.

6. The Kalachuri or *Haihaya* dynasty of Chedi ruled over the country to the south of the Narmada and to the north of the Godavari from Tripuri (Tewar, near Jabalpur), the capital of the kingdom. The kings of Chedi were constantly at war with their neighbours, both in Hindustan and the Dakhan. From the eleventh century the eastern portions of the kingdom (the districts around Ratanpur) were ruled by a branch of the dynasty. The most famous kings of the main line were Gangeya Deva (1015–1040) and his son Karna (1040–1070). The former extended his power over the eastern districts of the modern United Provinces, as well as over Tirhut. The latter was also a warlike chief. About 1050 A.D. he helped to crush Bhoja, the learned ruler of Malwa, but was himself soon after humbled by the Chandella king Kirtivarman. About the beginning of the thirteenth century the Chedi possessions on the Godavari were lost by the rise of the independent dynasties of the Ganapatis of Warangal and the Yadavas of Devagiri, while their dominions on the Narbada passed into the hands of the Vághela (*Baghella*) Rajputs,[1] after whom the area was named Baghelkhand.

The kingdom of Chedi.

7. On account of their extensive patronage of learning and poetry, the Parmars (Paramara) of Malwa have attained a greater historical celebrity than the other Rajput dynasties. The Narbada marked their southern boundary, and their dominion extended over a great part of the ancient kingdom of Avanti. Ujjain and Dhár (Dhara) were their chief towns. The Parmar territories were surrounded by warlike and ambitious states like Kanauj,

Malwa under the Parmars.

[1] The Vághelas were a branch of the Rajput Chalukyas (*Solanki*), and the ruler of the modern state of Rewah represents that clan at the present day.

Mahoba, Chedi, Gujarat, and the Chalukyan kingdom in the Dakhan, and its kings had consequently to maintain a constant watch over the frontiers. The most famous rulers of the dynasty were Munja (Vákpati) (A.D. 975–995), and his nephew Bhója (A.D. 1010–1053). Both were highly skilled in the arts of war and peace. After defeating the Chalukyas of the Dakhan several times, Munja was at last defeated and captured by them on the Godavari, and was put to death, in cold blood, by order of the Chalukya king. Bhója carried on his uncle's feud with the Chalukyas, and also turned his arms against Gujarat and Chedi. After reigning for over forty years, he too was overthrown by a combination of his enemies, and the glory of his house departed with him. Like Harsha, both Munja and Bhója were eminent poets, and took pride in a lavish patronage of letters. Their descendants lingered in Malwa till the thirteenth century, when they were overthrown by the Chohan Rajputs, who themselves were conquered about a hundred and fifty years later by the Muhammadans.

King Munja. Bhoja, A.D. 1010-1053.

8. About the middle of the ninth century Bihar and Bengal, which formed the dominions of the later Gupta dynasty, passed into the hands of the Palas. It is doubtful if these were Rajputs. They were almost the last patrons of Buddhism in India, and their zeal for that religion even made them assist in a Buddhist revival beyond the frontiers of India in Tibet. They were tolerant of Hinduism, to which the greater number of their subjects belonged. After A.D. 1050 the Hindu Sena dynasty made itself independent in Bengal, and the Palas were still further weakened by the conquest of Tirhut by the Kalachuris of Chedi. About the end of the twelfth century both the Palas and the Senas were overwhelmed by the Muhammadan invasion. Muhamammad-ibn-Bakhtiyar stormed Bihar, surprised

The Palas and the Senas of Behar and Bengal.

and seized Lakhnauti (Gaur) and Nudiah, and founded the Muhammadan rule in Bengal, which lasted till the second half of the eighteenth century, when the English conquered the country.

9. We may now turn to the kingdoms of the north and the north-west which had formed part of the older Indian empires, and which, on account of their position at the gateway of India, had to bear the brunt of the earliest Muhammadan attacks. Among these states, Sindh was the first to become a Muhammadan province. A Hun dynasty ruled over it from the time of Mihiragula, and it was displaced during the reign of Harsha by the family of a Brahman minister. Under the usurpers, the kingdom of Sindh embraced all the districts south of the Panjab and north of Gujarat.

Sindh.

In A.D. 711 the Arabs under Muhammad-ibn-Khasim invaded Sindh, destroyed the Brahman dynasty and conquered the country, which thenceforth remained subject to the Muhammadans.

10. Meanwhile, the Panjab and the districts around Kabul remained under a half-Hindu dynasty (probably descended from the later Kusanas) till the last quarter of the ninth century, when, as in Sindh, a Brahman usurped the throne and founded a new state with its capital *first* at *Ohind* (Udabhánda-pura) on the Indus, above Attock, and *then* at Lahore. Kabul fell into the hands of the Muhammadans just before this event. The later kings of Ohind appear as Rajputs, and it is not at present clear whether they were descended from the original usurper, or were members of a new family. Jayapala, Anandapala, and Trilochanapala, the last three independent kings of the dynasty, gallantly withstood the attacks of Sabaktigin and Sultan Mahmud, the powerful rulers of the new Muhammadan kingdom of Ghazni. Their efforts, however, proved unavailing to stem the torrent of

The Panjab.

Muhammadan invasion into India. By A.D. 1022 Lahore fell into the hands of the invaders, and the Panjab became a Muhammadan province. The Hindu rulers of Ohind and Lahore were celebrated in their days for the magnificence of their court and their liberal patronage of learning.

Effect of the Muhammadan conquest of the Panjab.

11. The fall of Lahore left the Muhammadans and the Tomaras of Kanauj face to face. Kanauj had already suffered during one of Sultan Mahmud's raids. The death of the great Muhammadan conqueror soon after, in A.D. 1030, gave the Hindus some breathing time. During this interval, about the end of the eleventh century, the Tomaras were driven out of Kanauj by the Gaharwar Rajputs.[1] The dispossessed Tomara retired to Delhi, which he enlarged and fortified. Kanauj meanwhile became for a short time supreme over North India, under Govindachandra (A.D. 1114–1160), and his grandson *Jayachchandra* (Jaichand, A.D. 1170–1193), the third and fifth members of the new Gaharwar dynasty. Kanauj might have continued paramount in Hindustan had it not been for the deadly feud between Jayachchandra and his cousin, the warlike Prithviraja ("Rai Pithora," A.D. 1170–1193), king of Ajmir and Delhi. Prithviraja was a Chohan Rajput, and had succeeded, through his mother, to the Tomara principality of Delhi. He was a dashing and heroic leader, and considered himself to be the real heir to the old Tomara claims for supremacy over Hindustan. In A.D. 1175 he publicly carried away the daughter of Jayachchandra, on the occasion of a *swayamvara*,[2] to

The kingdom of Kanauj under the Gaharwars.

Jayachchandra.

Prithviraja.

[1] This dynasty is frequently, and wrongly, referred to as belonging to the *Rathor* clan.

[2] A *swayamvara* was a public ceremony when a princess *either* chose her own husband *or* was given in marriage to the victor in a trial of strength among the assembled princes.

which he had not been invited. Five years later he extended his power into Bandelkhand by defeating the Chandella ruler, Paramardi. The enmity between Jayachchandra and his son-in-law was so bitter that when, in A.D. 1191, the Muhammadans under the famous Muhammad Ghori invaded Hindustan, Kanauj stood aside from the war, and left the patriotic work of defence to Prithviraja and his allies. The desperate courage of the Rajputs won Prithviraja a great victory over the Muhammadans in a hard-contested battle at Tirouri, between Thanesar and Karnal (A.D. 1191). Two years later the Muhammadans returned to the attack. Prithviraja and his allies again met the enemy on the same field as before, but were completely routed. The heroic Chohan and his son were captured and mercilessly butchered. The conqueror sacked Ajmir, took possession of Delhi, and then marched against Jayachchandra, who was defeated on the banks of the Jumna, north of Etawah, and driven to Benares. Kanauj, which had for centuries been one of the great capitals of India, was sacked. The fugitive Gaharwar ruler was captured and slain near Benares, which fell into the hands of the Muhammadans, and shared the fate of the other conquered towns. By 1203 the whole of Hindustan, down to the mouths of the Ganges, had been reduced by the Muhammadans. During the conquest the Rajput clans were either destroyed or driven to emigrate in a body to regions where they could not be easily pursued. Thus the great Gaharwar clan settled in the deserts of Rajputana, and founded there the famous state of Marwar (Jodhpur).

Battle of Tirouri, A.D. 1191.

Death of Prithviraja, A.D. 1193. Muhammadan conquest of Hinduism.

12. The history of Kashmir remains to be glanced over. Protected by its position and its mountain walls, the valley of Kashmir usually remained unaffected by the events and movements

Kashmir.

occurring in Hindustan. We saw how Mihiragula, the Hun, retired into Kashmir after his defeat in Central India. In the seventh century a powerful Hindu dynasty arose in Kashmir. Its most eminent member was Lalitáditya (Muktápida), who lived about A.D. 630, and conquered the Panjab and Kanauj, as well as Dardistan and Kabul. After his death Kashmir lost its foreign possessions and sank back into obscurity. In the twelfth century it recovered some of its old prestige under King Jayasimha (1127–1155 A.D.), the patron of the Kashmirian historian and poet *Kalhaṇa*. About 1340 A.D. it was conquered by a Muhammadan freelance named Shah Amir, who founded an independent dynasty, which was finally overthrown by the emperor Akbar.

SECTION II

Social Conditions of North India during the Period

13. We may now sketch briefly the condition of the people of North India during the five centuries covered in the last section. The most important social events of the period were the rise of the Rajputs, the decline of Buddhism, the triumphant establishment of Hinduism, and the introduction of the religion of Muhammad into India. Of these, the first three were to some extent connected, while the rapid progress of the Muhammadan arms and religion in Hindustan was also partly the consequence of the feuds and rivalries of the Rajput dynasties, which prevented their offering any combined and effective opposition to the invaders.

Principal social movements of the period.

14. During the period under review, no paramount ruler arose who was able to enforce his will throughout Hindustan. The rival sects and religions had therefore to contend with one another for mastery and influence, relying chiefly

Absence of a paramount power.

upon their own merits. Hinduism, it is true, was treated with marked favour by the new Rajput dynasties, but there was no attempt at any organized persecution of the other religions, viz. Buddhism and Jainism. Of these, the last made some progress during the period, and many religious and secular books were written by Jains, under the patronage of rulers who either belonged to that religion or viewed it with favour.[1]

Rivalry of Hinduism and Buddhism.

15. The epoch, however, proved fatal to Buddhism, which declined rapidly through natural causes. It had lost much of its inspiring force through the growth of forms and ceremonies, and the smothering of the higher teachings of the Buddha by a mass of dry and highly technical theology. Further, as Buddhism made a marked distinction between its *regular clergy* and its *lay followers*, assigning to the latter an inferior position in the Church, it became unacceptable to the mass of the people, who desired to live in the world and to be of it while working out their salvation, and who were, therefore, not prepared to enter the Buddhist *monastic* order. Its influence was also much undermined by the wholesale assimilation of many of its popular and attractive features by its rival—Hinduism, to which reference has already been made in an earlier chapter. Through the efforts of reformers like Sankaráchárya (about A.D. 800), Hinduism also obtained regular orders of monastic clergy, and began to follow an active policy of religious conversions. All these causes easily enabled it to supplant Buddhism as the religion of the people. Under royal patronage Buddhism lingered for some generations more in Bihar, but was driven out of that area by the Muhammadans, and was obliged to find refuge in mountainous and inaccessible tracts like

Decline of Buddhism and the triumph of Hinduism.

[1] The Parmar kings Munja and Bhoja, for instance, patronized Jain authors.

Nepal, Assam, and Bhutan, where it has survived to the present day.

Altered character of Hinduism.

16. The revived Hinduism was a very different religion from the old Brahmanism. Numerous foreign elements and practices had been absorbed by it, in its attempt to gather within its fold new nations and tribes. Its mythology had become very elaborate, and countless legends had arisen to justify or explain the worship of the new Hindu gods and goddesses. Among these Siva and Vishnu held still the first place. From a contemporary account, it appears that during the eleventh century the worship of the sun (Surya), Kali or Devi (the consort of Siva), Ganapati and Skanda (Siva's sons), almost equalled in popularity that of Siva and Vishnu. Less attention was paid to the *spirit* of the worship than to the *form*, and the moral degeneracy of the age showed itself in an increasing fondness for bloody rites, human sacrifices, the performance of incantations, black magic, the practice of unnatural austerities, and the adoration of *Saktis*, or female divinities. The worship of *Saktis* was often made the occasion for drunkenness and immorality. Sects multiplied, and the moral truths underlying all religions were being lost sight of in sectarian rivalries. A strong reformer was needed to stop the corruption. Kumarila, a Brahman preacher of great learning and zeal, attempted to stay the spread of the evil by calling on people to follow the simpler Vedic rites and ceremonies. He also devoted the best part of a busy life to preaching against Buddhism. Sankara, usually known as Sankarácchárya (about 800 A.D.), followed Kumarila a few generations later, and succeeded better, as he set himself primarily to the task of reforming Hinduism. He was a profound Sanskrit scholar and writer, an eloquent preacher, and a great religious reformer and organizer.

Hindu reformers, c. 700 A.D.

Sankara, c. 800 A.D.

Born in the Malabar country towards the end of the eighth century, he devoted the whole of a brief life of thirty-two years to the task of travelling throughout India, and confuting, wherever he found them, the advocates of corrupt religious views and practices, like the *Sakti* worshippers. He composed many religious and philosophical works, in which he set forth the wastefulness of religious conflicts and the narrowness and lowness of the teaching of the contemporary sects. He also expounded a system of pantheism, which he supported by quotations from the old Vedic texts, and to which in consequence he gave the name of the *Vedánta*. The reforming work of Sankara was done well and in time, as by giving Hinduism a broad philosophical basis, he prevented its immediate dissolution, and enabled it to step into the place of Buddhism as a religion appealing equally to all classes of Hindus.

The ascendancy of the higher castes.

17. The victorious establishment of Hinduism and the rise of the Rajputs secured the ascendancy of the Brahmans, and of the Brahmanical ideals of life and government. The new Rajput rulers took pride in styling themselves the descendants and successors of the Kshatriya heroes and demi-gods of the epics and the puranas. In accordance with these claims, they became the firm supporters of the Brahmans, and attempted to mould their lives and actions on the model of those of the heroes of the old epic poems. The administration of civil and criminal law was, as far as possible, conducted in accordance with the rules laid down in the Brahmanical law-books, like the Code of Manu, and in consequence Brahmans were exempted from taxation and from the most severe punishments for crimes.

Brahman privileges.

Rajput ideals.

The Rajput chiefs performed the old sacrifices, held *Swayamvaras*, gave liberal donations to Brahmans, and strove with each other for supremacy in love and war, like

the heroes of the epics. The bulk of the people forming the agricultural, industrial, and trading classes, being left to themselves and freed from military service, which had become the monopoly of the Rajputs, appear to have been on the whole contented and prosperous.

18. As was natural, the victory of Hinduism and the emulation of rival Hindu princes made the period one of great literary activity. The sectarian controversies of the time produced a large crop of religious and philosophical literature, composed generally in Sanskrit. Of these, the most numerous were those written by the Siva-worshippers of Kashmir, and the most important the great commentaries of Sankara on the Bhagavadgita, the Upanishads, and the Brahma-Sutras. Secular poetry and the drama received even greater attention, as every Rajput prince surrounded himself with a circle of poets. Some princes, like the Parmars, Munja, and Bhoja, were themselves authors of acknowledged eminence. Among the famous literary men of the epoch may be mentioned the great dramatic poet Bhavabhuti, the author of "Malati-Madhava" and "Uttararámacharita," who was a courtier, first of Yasomarvan of Kanauj, and afterwards of his conqueror Lalitaditya (730 A.D.); the classical poets, Magha, the author of "Sisupala-vadha" (800 A.D.), Padmagupta (950 A.D.), and Sri-harsha, the author of "Naishadha" (1150 A.D.) (the courtier of Jayachchandra of Kanauj); the dramatists Visákhadatta (800 A.D.), the author of the "Mudrárákshasa," a play founded on the life of Chandragupta Maurya, Bhatta Narayana (850 A.D.) (a courtier of the Pala court of Bihar), and Rájasèkhara (900 A.D.), who flourished under the Tomaras of Kanauj; Jayadeva (1100 A.D.), the author of a famous lyrical poem, "Gita-Govinda;" and the Kashmirian poets, Somadèva, Kshèmendra, and Bilhana (twelfth century). We might also mention along with these the chronicler

Literature.

Kalhana, the author of the "Rajatarangini," a chronicle of the kings of Kashmir.

Social life.

19. Once within the Hindu fold the Rajputs became passionately fond of their birth and social position, and sought to maintain both. Trade and agriculture were regarded as occupations unfit for a true-born Rajput, and were left to the ordinary people. Religion and learning largely remained the monopoly of the Brahmans, who were also occasionally employed as ministers. Every Rajput tried to marry his daughters into higher clans, and to take a wife from a lower clan. The honour of women was highly prized, and the devotion to the sex was shown not merely by *Swayamvaras*, but also in the revival of cruel and half-aboriginal customs like widow-burning (*sati*) and the wholesale massacre of women in beleagured forts and cities, to prevent their falling into the hands of enemies (*johur*). Love of military exploits and the striving for supremacy in love led to ceaseless private and public wars. The strong religious feelings of the time saved pilgrims and the agricultural population from molestation during wars, while the traders protected themselves by starting powerful guilds in the several cities and trades. Pilgrimages became the fashion, and temples were richly endowed by princes as well as by private benefactors. Stone architecture, through the influence of the Dakhan, became common, especially for temples. The influence of the South was not only felt in architecture, but also in religion. Reformers like Sankara and Ramanuja were as popular in North India as in their own native South. It was also inevitable that in an age of ceaseless strife, a life of peace and quiet should appeal to many men and women. Thus, Jainism, with its humane teachings, appealed to an ever-widening circle of followers, and it became quite one of the most influential religions of the period.

CHAPTER X.

SECTION I.

HISTORY OF GUJARAT

1. We may now turn to the history of Gujarat (including Kathiawar), the Dakhan, and South India.

The country.

2. The name of Gujarat (Sanskrit, Gúrjararáshtra) implies the kingdom of the Gurjjaras, a foreign tribe who entered India from the north-west, and spread as far south as Khandesh. The old name for the peninsula of Kathiawar was Saurashtra (*i.e.* the goodly kingdom), and before the settlement of the Gurjjaras there, the northern and southern portions of the mainland of Gujarat were respectively called Ánartta and Láta. The fertility of Gujarat, the gift of the rivers Sabaramati, Narbada, and Tapti, attracted to it from the earliest times many strangers as conquerors and as refugees. Its advantageous position also gave Gujarat an early control of a great part of the sea-trade of the West, and it continued for many centuries to be one of the wealthiest and most coveted provinces of India.

Early rulers.

3. The authentic history of Gujarat begins with the third century B.C., when it formed part of the Mauryan empire. An ancient inscription (dated A.D. 150) ascribes certain repairs and improvements to the Sudarsana lake, near Girnar in

Kathiawar, to a brother-in-law of Chandragupta Maurya, and to a Yavana (Greek?) governor of Asoka. After the fall of the Mauryas, some of the Græco-Bactrian princes appear to have exercised a fitful rule over Kathiawar and parts of the mainland of Gujarat. They were followed by the Sakas, and during the first century A.D. Gujarat and Malwa were governed by Saka chiefs, who bore the Persian title of Satrap (*Kshaharata;* Sanskrit, *Kshátrapa*), and represented, probably, a distant Parthian or Saka ruler. They were constantly at war with the

The Satraps.



A Coin of Nahapana.

powerful Andhra dynasty of the Dakhan. The possessions of *Nahapana*, one of the early Satraps, included the western part of the Dakhan, in addition to Gujarat and Malwa. About A.D. 126, the powerful Andhra king Gautami-putra Satakarni (Vilivayakura II.) defeated Nahapana and almost destroyed the Satrap power. He invested a Saka named Chastana with the government of the conquered Satrap possessions. The descendants of Chastana became independent, called themselves Great Satraps (*Mahá-kshátrapa*), and their rule lasted altogether to very nearly the end of the fourth century A.D. The early Satraps appear to have been disliked by the people as foreigners who followed strange ways and gods, but the Great Satraps were Hindus in religion, were distinguished patrons of the Indian religions, and used Sanskrit in their official

Nahapana.

Chastana.

records. But as Sakas they continued to be viewed with dislike, and so, when the last Satrap of Malwa and Gujarat was overthrown by the northern emperor Chandragupta II. (Vikramaditya), the latter took the title of the "foe of the Sakas" (*Sakári*), the designation of the Vikramaditya of Indian legend.

About B.C. 395.

4. The greatest Satrap was Rudradaman (A.D. 145–158). He was a mighty conqueror, and recovered from the Andhra ruler (who was his son-in-law) the provinces of Western Dekhan and Konkan. He also conquered the whole of Malwa, besides Kacch and Sindh. He patronized Brahmanism. He described himself in an inscription as one "who took and kept to the end of life the vow to stop the killing of men except in battle." He repaired the dam of the Sudarsana Lake, and put upon it the famous inscription which makes reference to the Mauryan rule in Gujarat. He appears to have been a wise and capable ruler. He recorded with pride that he expended on his public works "a great amount of money from his own treasury, without oppressing the people of the town and the country by the exaction of (special) taxes, forced labour, and gifts."

Rudradaman, A.D. 143-158.

5. After the overthrow of the Satraps, Malwa, Kutch, and Gujarat remained in the possession of the Gupta emperors for above a century and a half. When the Gupta empire declined through the invasions of the Huns, the Gurjjara tribe settled on the mainland of Gujarat, and gave it the name by which it has since been known. In the sixth century, a Gurjjara chief, employed as a general (Senápati) under the Gupta kings, made himself independent at Valábhi (in Kathiawar, near the head of the inlet of Cambay), and founded a dynasty which ruled in Gujarat till about A.D. 760.

The Guptas.

Dynasty of Valabhi.

6. The kings of Valabhi were Hindus, and generally worshipped Siva, but they also treated Buddhists and Jains with kindness. A generation before the visit of Hiouen Thsang, Gujarat was under a pious king of this dynasty. Harsha of Thanesar made successful war on Valabhi, then weakened by the rise of an independent dynasty at Bhroach, which received countenance and aid from the powerful Chalukya kings of the Dakhan. About 670 A.D. the Valabhi king assumed the imperial titles, and his successors tenaciously held to them, without any attempt to deserve the rank. About A.D. 760 their capital, Valabhi, was sacked and destroyed by the Arabs.[1]

7. A branch of the Rashtrakuta family, which was then all-powerful in the Dakhan, succeeded the Valabhis and ruled over part of Gujarat till the last quarter of the tenth century A.D. The northern districts were then under a petty dynasty, which had its capital at Anahilavara. Both these dynasties fell at the same time before the Rajputs of the Solanki or Chalukya race. Under the Solankis, Gujarat was very prosperous, and its wealth attracted the attention of the celebrated Mahmud of Ghazni, who, in A.D. 1024, invaded Gujarat from the north, and destroyed the great temple of Somnath. Gujarat continued in the possession of the Solankis till the thirteenth century, when it passed into the possession of the Vaghelas, from whom the Muhammadans conquered the country a century after (*i.e.* about 1296).[2]

The Rashtrakutas.

The Solankis.

[1] The famous royal house of Mewar (Udaipur) in Rajputana, claims descent from the Valabhi dynasty.

[2] Kumárapála (A.D. 1143–1174) is the most famous of the later Hindu kings of Gujarat. He was a successful warrior and a liberal patron of learning. The versatile writer Hèmachandra (a Jain monk) was under his patronage. Kumarapala rebuilt Somnath and made many gifts to the Jains.

SECTION II

History of the Dakhan

The country.

8. The term Dakhan (Sanskrit, *Dakshina*, meaning "South") has usually denoted the country lying between the Narbada and Krishna rivers, and its western and eastern halves have been respectively called Mahárâshtra and Telingana. This region was usually safe from invasion from the north and west, being protected on those sides by mountains. At the same time, being a tableland, it often enabled its ruling peoples to overflow into the plains of the south, and occasionally also into Hindustan. Long before the beginning of its authentic history, the Dakhan was occupied by branches of the great Dravidian race, who have left their mark unmistakably on the features and the languages of its inhabitants.

The Dravidians.

"Aryan" settlement.

9. The "Aryan" settlement in the Dakhan began after the seventh century B.C., when its people had already reached a high degree of civilization. The "Aryans" came into it only after colonizing Vidarbha (Berar) and Kalinga. Their numbers, however, increased so rapidly in their new surroundings that before the fifth century B.C. a separate book of law—the code of Ápastamba—was compiled for their special guidance. During the early years of Buddhism, Pratisthána (Paithan), on the Godavari, was a great centre of trade, connected by roads with Bharukachcha (Bhroach) on the Arabian sea, and the principal towns of North India.

Ápastamba.

10. During the third century B.C. the Dakhan formed a part of the Mauryan empire. The inscriptions of Asoka mention among its leading tribes two who, in later times, became quite famous. These were the

Ráshtrakas (the Rattas, or Ráshtrakútas), who gave their name—Mahá-Ráshtra—to their native country, and the Ándhras, a Dravidian people who spoke a language from which modern Telugu is usually said to be derived. During the time of Megasthenes, the Andhras were reckoned one of the great powers of India, and were believed to be second, in point of military strength and resources, only to the ruling state of Magadha.

The Dakhan in the third century B.C.

11. After the death of Asoka the Dakhan became independent under the Andhras. They belonged to the Satavahana family, and generally added the title Satakarni to their names. They reigned for nearly four centuries and a half, *i.e.* from B.C. 230 to A.D. 226. One of them overthrew, in B.C. 27, the last Kanva emperor of Magadha and stepped into his place. About the beginning of the second century A.D. the Andhras came into collision with the Satraps of Gujarat and Malwa, and the wars thus begun continued for several generations. Gautamiputra Satakarni (Vilivayakura II.) destroyed, in A.D. 126, the Satrap Nahapana. In the next generation the Satrap Rudradaman defeated, as we saw, the Andhra king of the time, who happened also to be his son-in-law, but restored to him most of the conquered possessions. The Satavahana dynasty lingered on till A.D. 226, after which it disappears from notice.

The Andhras or Satavahana dynasty, B.C. 250 A.D. 226.

12. The inscriptions of the Satavahanas throw some light on the social conditions of the Dakhan during their time. We learn from them that Brahmanism and Buddhism flourished side by side without any open hostility, but that the latter was more popular than the former during the earlier years of the period. Princes, and even ordinary citizens—like corn-dealers, goldsmiths, and druggists—vied with one another in founding

Condition of the people under the Satavahanas.

asylums for the Buddhist clergy, and rest-houses on the coast for those returning from foreign countries. Many of the Buddhist "cave-temples" of Western India were excavated during this period. They are carved out of the solid rock, and bear witness to the piety of their builders and the infinite patience and very high degree of artistic skill possessed by the architects and sculptors of the time. The roads were well kept, and travelling was fairly safe. Trade and industry flourished, and the different occupations and professions were supervised by their respective guilds, which generally undertook to pay the interest on the charitable endowments entrusted to them. The rate of interest was from 5 to $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Large seaports existed on the site of Bhroach and Bassein. Pratisthana (Paithan), Kalyána, and Dhanyaketa were great inland cities and centres of trade. Towns had their own governing bodies (*Nigama-sabha*).

The Pallavas.

13. For the three hundred and fifty years following the downfall of the Satavahanas we have no proper historical record. The Palhavas, or *Pallavas*, a foreign tribe supposed to be of Parthian origin, had before this forced their way into the Dakhan and South India, and made themselves masters of the country to the south of the Godavari. In Maharashtra, after the fall of the Andhras, the native Rashtrakas fought sturdily against these Pallavas, but without avail.

The early Chalukyas of Vatapi.

In the sixth century A.D. the Chalukyas, a northern family of Rajput blood, entered the Dakhan, dislodged the Pallavas from Vatápipura (Badami), their capital in the South Maratha country, and gradually conquered the rest of the Dakhan. The Pallavas were driven south of the Tungabhadra and Krishna rivers, and the succeeding two hundred years are full of the struggles between them and the Chalukyas.

14. The most famous member of the Chalukya



View of the Cave-Temple at Karli.
(Reproduced by permission of the photographers, Messrs. Bourne and Shepherd, Bombay, Calcutta, and Simla.)

dynasty was Pulakesin II. (Satyásraya), who is also one of the great kings of ancient India. He ascended the throne in A.D. 608, and reigned for above thirty-five years. He was thus the lifelong contemporary of the great Harsha, whom he defeated on the Narbada in A.D. 620. From this achievement it would be seen that Pulakesin was a great and successful warrior. His inscriptions record the conquest of Gujarat and Malwa, and the Pallavas of the Vengi country (between the deltas of the Godavari and the Krishna) and Kanchipura. Of these the Vengi principality became part of the Chalukyan empire, and Pulakesin constituted it into a frontier province to resist the inroads of the Pallavas, and appointed his brother Vishnuvardhana its first viceroy. Later on Vishnuvardhana's descendants made themselves independent and became known as the *Eastern* Chalukyas, the original branch of the family being called the *Western* Chalukyas. Pulakesin entered into friendly relations with the Cholas and the Pandyas of the south, who sought his help and protection against the Pallavas. His power was very great, and his empire extended from sea to sea, and from the Narbada on the north to the Palar river on the south. He was at the head of a numerous and formidable army. The Chinese pilgrim, Hiouen Thsang, who visited the Dakhan in A.D. 639, thus describes Pulakesin and his army: "He is of the race of Kshatriyas. His name is Pulakesin. His ideas are large and profound, and he extends widely his sympathy and benefactions. His subjects serve him with perfect self-devotion. . . . The State maintains a body of dauntless champions to the number of several hundreds. . . . Whenever the army commences a campaign these braves march in the van to the sound of the drum. Besides, they intoxicate many hundreds of

Pulakesin II. (acc. A.D. 608).

Foundation of the Eastern Chalukya dynasty.

Hiouen Thsang on Pulakesin II.



Persian Embassy to Pulakesin II.

(From an Ajanta fresco painting.)

naturally fierce elephants. . . . They run in a body, trampling everything under their feet. No enemy can stand before them. The king, proud of possessing these men and elephants, despises and slights the neighbouring kingdoms. The power and magnificence of the king thus described were so great that even the distant king of Persia heard of them, and despatched an embassy to the Dakhan court in A.D. 625.[1]

Decline of the Chalukya power.

15. The last days of this great king were clouded by misfortunes. The Vengi country became independent. The Pallavas invaded the Dakhan and laid the country waste. The old king himself was unable to check them, and seems to have died resisting them. The Pallavas were repulsed in the following reign, and were afterwards repeatedly defeated by the Chalukyas. But the latter had become weakened by the constant wars, and about A.D. 750 a rebellious vassal, descended from the native Rashtrakuta, overthrew the last member of Pulakesin's house and seized the throne.

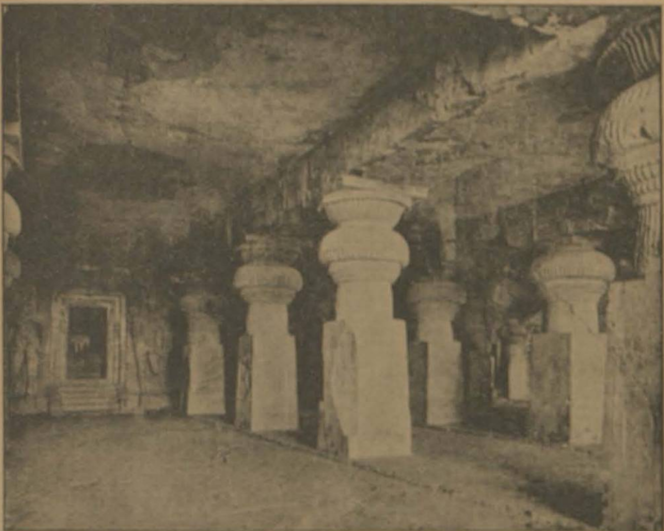
The Rashtrakuta dynasty.

16. The Rashtrakuta kings were even more warlike than their predecessors. They fought with all their neighbours, and enriched the Dakhan with the spoils of their campaigns. Krishna I. (A.D. 760–770) had the wonderful Kailas temple at Ellura carved out of the rock. Under his successors, Govinda III. (A.D. 780–815) and Amoghavarsha (A.D. 815–877), the Rashtrakuta dominions embraced all the possessions of Pulakesin II. in his most prosperous days. Krishna III. (about A.D. 915), or *Kannaradeva*, conquered the Cholas, captured their principal cities—Conjeevaram and Tanjore—and made the Kaveri the southern boundary of his kingdom. But, like the Chalukyas, their successors soon felt the exhausting

[1] A fresco painting at Ajanta (unhappily mutilated in part) is believed to picture the reception of the Persian envoys by Pulakesin: *vide* illustration.

influence of long-continued war. In A.D. 973 the last Rashtrakuta king was deposed by a vassal named Tailapa, who ascended the vacant throne, claiming to be a descendant of the old Chalukya family. His descendants ruled over the Dakhan for nearly two hundred years, and are usually referred to as the *later* Chalukyas of *Kalyani*.

17. During the reigns of the early Chalukya and



ELLURA CAVE.

the Rashtrakuta kings, Hinduism rapidly displaced Buddhism as the religion of the State and of the people. But as religious toleration was the rule, Buddhists and Jains were left to themselves. Pulakesin II. had a Jain court poet, and some of the Rashtrakutas (*e.g.* Amoghavarsha) were liberal patrons of the Jains, who began to multiply rapidly in the

Condition of the people under the early Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas.

country. Sanskrit learning and poetry were encouraged by these kings, while the old Dravidian tongue, Telugu, benefited largely by the patronage of their contemporaries, the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. The period was one of great building activity, and many temples were erected in honour of the Hindu deities. The high degree of skill attained by the architects, sculptors, and painters of the time is shown by the rock-cut temple at Ellura,[1] to which reference has been already made, and the life-like paintings and frescoes in the caves of Ajanta (Inhyadri). The wealth and power of the rulers of the Dakhan were so great that even Arabian writers knew of them.

The later Chalukyas of Kalyani.

18. The rise of the later Chalukya dynasty occurred when South India was passing under the rule of a series of very powerful Chola kings. Between the two dynasties the old feud of the Chalukyas and the Pallavas was revived. Tailapa, the first of the new Chalukyas, was a contemporary of the great Raja-Raja, who ascended the Chola throne in A.D. 985. He was also repeatedly attacked and defeated by the Parmar Munja (Vakpati). The latter was at last taken prisoner by Tailapa, who cruelly put him to death, as the only way of getting rid of a troublesome enemy. Raja Raja overran the Vengi country, gave a daughter in marriage to the Eastern Chalukya king, and effectually separated him from his Western kinsman. He then fiercely harried the Dakhan with fire and sword. The accession of *Somesvara* (A.D. 1040–1069), a warlike king, who gained the title of *Ahavamalla*, the "wrestler in battle," freed the Dakhan from the invaders. He defeated and slew the Chola king, Rajadhiraja, in a battle fought in Mysore (A.D. 1059), and followed the

Tailapa.

[1] The rock-cut temples at Ellura were not *freaks*, as commonly imagined, but were so designed as being *cheaper* and more impressive than structural temples.

retreating enemy almost to the walls of Conjeevaram. He also sacked Dhar, the Parmar capital, and defeated the powerful Karna, the ruler of Chedi.



View of Interior of a Cave at Ajanta.
(From Fergusson's "History of Indian and Eastern Architecture." John Murray.)

19. Seven years after the death of Someswara, the throne of the Dakhan was seized by his younger son

Vikramanka, usually known as Vikramaditya VI. He reigned for fifty years, from A.D. 1076, and fully restored the glory of his house and kingdom. His Chola contemporary was the great Kulottunga I. (A.D. 1070–1118), who ruled over almost the whole of the territory now forming the presidency of Madras. Both kings were middle-aged men when they came to the throne, and each had sufficient respect for the other not to rush into any needless war. The Dakhan and South India, therefore, enjoyed nearly half a century of unusual tranquillity. Literature and the arts flourished under royal patronage. The poet Bilhana was the laureate of Vikramaditya, and the celebrated jurist, Vignánèsvara, whose book (the *Mitakshara*) is a standard authority on Hindu law, was one of his dependants.

Vikramaditya VI., A.D. 1076-1126.

20. The last days of Vikramaditya and Kulottunga I. were darkened by the rise of a new state in Mysore, under Vishnuvardhana, the founder of the Hoysala Ballala dynasty, who successfully resisted the armies of both the northern and southern emperors. After Vikramaditya's death, the province of Telingana also threatened to separate from the kingdom. This event was averted by a short-lived usurpation by Bijjala, an able general descended from the Kalachuri race. The usurpation, unfortunately, occurred about the same time as a peculiar religious movement, which revived the worship of Siva and incited the destruction of Jains and Brahmans. The leader of the revival was *Basava*, the minister of Bijjala. As the latter was a Jain, a revolution followed, during which both the leaders were killed. The Chalukyas were again placed on the throne, but enjoyed only the semblance of power. The Dakhan came to be divided between the Yadavas, whose capital was Devagiri (Daulatabad), the

Disruption of the later Chalukya empire.

The Kalachuri usurpation, A.D. 1162-1182.

Basava.

Kakatiyas, who ruled from Warangal (Èkasilápuri), and the Hoysala Ballalas of Dwárasamudra,[1] whose power extended as far north as the Krishna. The incessant wars of these rival states rapidly weakened them and made them easily fall before the Muhammadans. Ramachandra (1271–1310 A.D.), the last independent Yádava king, was conquered in A.D. 1294 by Ala-ud-din Khalji. In 1309 A.D. the Kakatiya ruler, Prataparudra II., was defeated by Malik Kafur and compelled to pay tribute to the Muhammadan emperor of Delhi.[2]

NOTE.

Basava was a social as well as a religious reformer. In place of the promiscuous worship of many gods, he inculcated an ardent devotion to *Siva*. Being a fanatic, he taught that it was good to destroy all heretics, especially the Jains. He denounced the institution of caste, and said that all Siva-worshippers were equal, irrespective of birth or social position. He forbade among his followers the eating of animal food, the drinking of intoxicating liquors, and the early marriage of girls. He exhorted all his disciples to union, and asked them to wear small *lingas*. Hence his followers are usually known as *Lingáyats*.

The Lingayat revival.

SECTION III

HISTORY OF SOUTH INDIA

21. The early history of South India (applying the name to the country south of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra) is shrouded in impenetrable obscurity. Many hundreds of years ago, long before the Aryans entered India, it was in the occupation of the gifted Dravidians. These,

The early Dravidians.

[1] Now *Halebid*, in the Belur Taluq of the state of Mysore.

[2] The chiefs of Bastar (Vastara) in the Central Provinces claim descent from the Kakatiyas of Warangal, the surviving members of that dynasty having withdrawn into the jungles of Bastar on the Mussulman conquest of the Dakhan.

at one time in their history, had settlements even in Hindustan, but were forced south by the Aryan invasions. Even in those early ages they were not behindhand of the Aryans in culture. Protected by their position near the extremity of the peninsula, they were from the beginning able to maintain their languages, customs, and manners, unmodified to any great extent by the influence of the Aryans of the north. In spite of the racial admixtures of ages, Dravidian features are still recognizable in the appearance of many of the present inhabitants of South India.

The Andhras and the Tamils.

22. The Rattas and the Andhras of the Dakhan were, in all probability, tribes of Dravidian extraction, and Telugu, one of the chief Dravidian languages, is usually referred to as the Andhra tongue (Andhrabháshá). But the people speaking Tamil were the most typical members of the Dravidian race. Theirs were the three chief historical powers of South India—the Pandyas of the extreme south, the Cheras of the Malabar coast, and the Cholas, who ruled over the tract watered by the Kaveri river. These kingdoms are mentioned by a Sanskrit grammarian of the fourth century B.C., by the Greek ambassador Megasthenes (B.C. 300), by the inscriptions of Asoka, and by the Greek and Roman geographers of the first century A.D. All these confirm the Indian traditions, which ascribe to the three kingdoms a very high antiquity.

The three kingdoms of the South.

Dravidian sea-trade.

23. Very early in history the Dravidians of South India developed into a great sea-trading people. The Bible (1 Kings ix. and x.) mentions that the Jewish King Solomon (B.C. 1000) received from his mariners periodical gifts of gold, silver, precious stones, spices, sandalwood, apes, and peacocks. As all these objects, except silver, have

been abundant in Malabar, and as the Hebrew word used to denote "peacock" (*tukhim*) seems to be connected with the Tamil name for the bird (*tokai*), many learned men regard this as an evidence of the early Dravidian intercourse with the West. Further, it is believed that when, between the tenth and sixth centuries B.C., Babylon had a great trade with China, the Dravidians had a chief share in it. The Semitic alphabet of Mesopotamia, from which many of the Indian letters are descended, is also held to have been introduced into India by Dravidian merchants, who, in the course of trade, had visited Babylonia. This maritime commerce appears to have been kept up by the Dravidians with Persia, which overcame Babylon, and with the Greeks and the Romans, who later on became supreme in Western Asia. During the first and second centuries A.D., there was a brisk intercourse between the Roman empire and the Chera and Pandya countries, where large hoards of Roman coins, indicating this connection, have been discovered in recent times. The trade is stated to have been of considerable value, and to have consisted in the exchange of delicate muslins, pearls (from the Gulf of Mannar), precious stones, and spices for the gold of the West.[1]

Introduction of the Semitic alphabet into India.

Roman intercourse with South India.

24. The Tamil-speaking Dravidians excelled not only in trade, but also equally in war, and the arts. The three kings of the south (*Múvarasar*), the Pandya, the Chera, and the Chola, were ever contending with one another for supremacy over the Tamil country. The long series of

Dravidian wars.

[1] The fact that the chief early Dravidian cities, viz. Puhar or Kaveri-pattanam, Kayal, Korkai, Tondi (near Rameswaram), Túttukudi (Tuticorin), Kanyá-Kumári (Cape Comorin), Karavur (near Cranganore), and Tondi (Quilandy), besides the buried towns which have been recently discovered in Tinnevelly District, were on the coast, points to the importance attached by the Dravidians to sea-trade.

Tamil invasions of Ceylon began in the third century B.C., and after the first century A.D. patriotic Ceylonese (Singhalese) princes began to retaliate by occasionally invading the Tamil country.[1] In consequence of these wars the boundaries of the South Indian states were constantly shifting, and it is difficult to describe them correctly. The rapid conquest of the Chola and Chera provinces by the northern invaders, the Pallavas, about the beginning of the present era, was itself partly due to this constant war and the inability of the southern kingdoms to unite against a common foe. Literature, however, prospered through the rivalries of the Dravidian princes. Tamil became, as early as the first century A.D., a polished literary tongue.[2] Hinduism, as well as Jainism and Buddhism, had then already become the popular religion of the country. The very ancient irrigation works, like the many channels of the Kaveri river, and the diversion of the broad Palar from its former into its present course, have to be assigned to this, if not an earlier age. It may also be assumed that the Dravidians, at the beginning of the Christian era, were already skilled architects, and could build substantial temples like the remarkable pavilions (carved out of the rock) at Mámallapuram ("Seven Pagodas" to the south of Madras), or the *stupas* at Amaravati, on the Krishna river.[3]

Relations with Ceylon.

Early Tamil literature.

Their skill in architecture.

[1] Jaffna (Yalpanam), in Northern Ceylon, was founded by the Tamils about B.C. 100, according to a local legend.

[2] The illustrious "Kural" (a book of moral distichs composed by Tiru-valluvar, a low-caste weaver poet of Mylapore), and the epics "Silappadhikaram" ("the book of the anklet") and "Manimekalai" may be assigned to the early centuries of the Christian era. They are among the finest poems in Tamil.

[3] These are believed to belong to the fifth and fourth centuries A.D., respectively.

25. In the second century A.D. we find the Pallavas supreme over the whole of South India from the Krishna to the Kaveri. Their rule, however, appears to have been simply superimposed over those of the local dynasties which were not uprooted. The chief seat of their power was Kanchi (Conjeeveram), but princes or viceroys of Pallava blood ruled over the Telugu and west coast districts from Vengipura and Palakkadu (Palghat) respectively. About A.D. 150, a great Pallava king named Sivaskandavarman, a Hindu and a devotee of Siva, as his name implies, like his contemporary the great Satrap Rudradaman, celebrated the horse-sacrifice partly in token of his having attained the position of a sovereign of the first rank, and partly in proof of his being an orthodox Hindu ruler and not a mere foreigner. In the fourth century A.D., when the northern emperor Samudragupta invaded South India, he found the Pallavas all-powerful in the country. In the fifth century, the Pallavas seem to have retained their rule over part of the Dakhan, and in the sixth century the Chalukyas had to dislodge them, as we saw from Vatapi (Badami). A long struggle then began between the rulers of the Dakhan and of South India, which lasted with varying fortunes for about six hundred years. About A.D. 600, the Pallava Mahendravarman I. was defeated by Pulakesin II., who permanently deprived him of the Vengi province, which passed from that time into the hands of a Chalukya family. Narasimhavarman (A.D. 625–645), however, defeated the Chalukya ruler just as the latter had defeated the great Harsha

The Pallavas.



PALLAVA GOLD COIN.

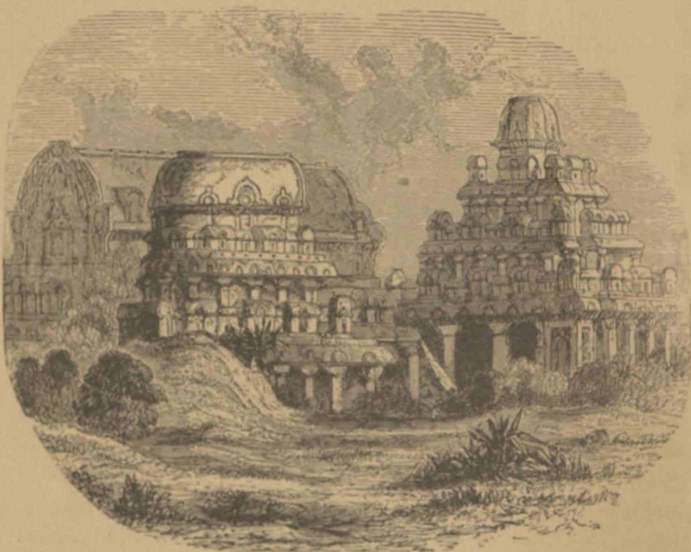
Sivaskandavarman, A.D. 150.

Conflicts with the Chalukyas.

Narasimhavarman, A.D. 625-645.

of Thanesar.[1] The struggle continued during the succeeding generations, even after the accession of the Rashtrakuta dynasty in the Dakhan. The Pallavas, however, could not last for ever in the face of attacks from outside and the constant fear of rebellion within the kingdom. In

Conflict with the Rashtrakutas.



THE RATHAS, MAHA-BALIPURAM.

(*From Fergusson's "History of Indian and Eastern Architecture." John Murray.*)

Mysore especially, the dynasty of *Southern Gangas* openly rebelled against the Pallavas, and leaned for support on the rulers of the Dakhan. In the tenth

[1] Narasimha bore the title of Mahámalla, or "the great wrestler." Some of the temples at Mamallapuram (which is named after him) were built by him. Later legends ascribed the foundation of the city to the Puranic emperor, *Maha-bali*, and the name of the city was accordingly changed to Maha-balipuram.

century, the Cholas became a great power in South India under a dynasty of very able kings. Their attacks finally destroyed the dominion of the Pallavas in South India, and Kanchipura became thenceforth one of the Chola capitals.

Condition of literature and religion under the Pallavas.

26. Buddhism and Jainism had been introduced into South India during the time of the early Mauryan emperors, and had long been influential there. About the beginning of the present era a reaction began against them, through the silent revival of Hinduism. The Pallavas, like the foreign dynasties of Northern India, soon became the patrons of the Hindu sects of Siva and Vishnu. About the fifth century a movement began among the common people, who in South India have always been very religious in their tendencies, in favour of the worship of Siva and Vishnu, and directed against Buddhism and Jainism, as well as the ascendancy of the Brahman caste. The whole of South India (excepting parts of Mysore and the west coast, where Jainism survived) was converted to Hinduism, and numerous stately temples rose to Hindu deities. The movement also enriched Tamil literature with a large body of remarkable hymns (collected as the *Tiruvasagam*, *Tevaram*, and *Tiruvaimoli*), some of which represent the finest religious poetry in Indian literature.[1]

The Chola dynasty.

27. The real founder of the new Chola dynasty which inherited from the Pallavas the supremacy over South India was Parantaka I. (A.D. 900-940). He was a distinguished warrior, and conquered the kings of Madura and Celyon. He ruled in great splendour from his capital at Uraiyur (near Trichinoply), and died after a long reign. The prosperity of the Chola kingdom unfortunately attracted the attention of the war-

Parántaka.

[1] The Jain contributions to Tamil literature are also among our most precious possessions in that language.

like Rashtrakutas of the Dakhan, who during the succeeding reigns repeatedly invaded the Tamil country, once even penetrating as far south as Tanjore. The overthrow of the Rashtrakutas (A.D. 975) gave South India time to recover from the invasions. In A.D. 985 the great *Raja Raja*, the most illustrious member of his dynasty, ascended the Chola throne. For seven years he matured his plans, and in the eighth he began a career of conquest which after six years left him supreme over all South

Raja Raja, A.D. 985–1017.



GOLD COIN OF RAJA RAJA CHOLA.

India. Ceylon, the west coast, the Eastern Chalukya kingdom, and Kalinga had all been successfully invaded by him, and made to acknowledge his power. The Chera power was crippled by the destruction of the Malabar fleet. The alliance of the Vengi kingdom was secured by its conquest and subsequent restoration to its ruler, who also received a daughter of the conqueror in marriage. Raja Raja, having effectually secured his northern frontier, proceeded to ravage the Dakhan, less perhaps with the design of forming permanent conquests than to secure respect for his own frontiers. In the eighteenth year of his reign he sheathed his sword and devoted himself to the task of administering the empire, and building in memory of his victories the great temple of Tanjore, the finest example of Dravidian architecture in South India, and a fitting emblem of the soaring ambition, power, and genius of the ruler who erected it. In A.D. 1011, six

years before his death, he associated his son Rajendra with himself in the government of the kingdom.

28. Rajendra ruled up to about A.D. 1042, and the whole of his reign was taken up with the work of completing his father's conquest of South India. The Gangas of Mysore, who had troubled the Pallavas, again began to rebel, and leaned to a Chalukyan alliance. Rajendra defeated them, and further

Rajendra Chola.



CHOLA SILVER COIN (RAJENDRA).

strengthened his position against the Chalukyas of the Dakhan by giving his daughter in marriage to her cousin the Eastern Chalukya ruler. This proved a very eventful union, as Kulottunga I., the greatest Chola king next to Raja Raja, was the child of this marriage.

29. After the death of Rajendra, troubles came thick on the Chola kingdom. The Pandyas, the Cheras, and the Gangas revolted. The Chalukyas, under the warlike Someswara (Ahavamalla), invaded South India, and a Chola king died manfully on the field of battle defending his crown and country. The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi also proved untrustworthy, and had to be conquered again. The strain of the war is evident from the fact that *five* kings ruled successively over the Chola kingdom after Rajendra for a total period of less than twenty-eight years.

Confusion in the Chola kingdom, A.D. 1042-1070.

30. Relief, however, came to the country in A.D. 1070, when Rajendra, *alias* Kulottunga I., the head of the Eastern Chalukya family since A.D. 1063, seized the Chola throne after

Kulottunga I., A.D. 1070-1118.



The Great Temple at Tanjore.
(Reproduced by permission of the photographers, Messrs. Nicholas & Co., Madras.)

putting all his rivals out of the way. He was the grandson of Rajendra Chola I., and was perhaps, also, the grandson of the great Raja Raja. He was also married to a granddaughter of Rajendra I. Thus uniting in himself many claims to the Chola throne, he succeeded to it, after an apprenticeship of seven years as a king in the Vengi country. In his youth he had been a distinguished soldier, and he justified his early reputation by the conquest of Kalinga, the Ganga, and Pandya countries, as well as South Travancore. His victories were complete, and during the greater part of a long reign of fifty years his empire enjoyed unwonted peace Kulottunga turned his attention to the government of his great empire, and had the whole of it surveyed for purposes of revenue administration (A.D. 1086). He emulated Raja Raja as a temple builder, and also literally patronized both Tamil and Telugu literature, as became a ruler who united in himself the blood of the Chalukyas and the Cholas. Lastly, he signalized the complete tranquillity of his kingdom by abolishing, once for all, the vexatious tolls which had till then harassed the traveller and the merchant in passing from one district of the empire to another.

Decline of the Chola power.

31. The decline of the Chola empire set in during the last days of Kulottunga I. In A.D. 1117, Bittideva (A.D. 1100–1141), better known by his later name of Vishnuvardhana, the Hoysala, prince of Dwarasamudra, drove the Chola governors from the Ganga territory. Before his death, he had become master of the greater part of the country now forming the Mysore state.

Rise of the Ballala dynasty.

Vira Ballala (A.D. 1173–1220), the grandson of Bittideva, completed his ancestor's conquests, and maintained his independence in the face of both the Cholas and the Chalukyas.

Singhalese invasion, c. 1175 A.D.

About the time of his accession South India was convulsed by a Singhalese (Ceylonese)

invasion. The Pandyan ruler was repeatedly defeated, and had to seek the help of the Chola king. The invaders were at last repulsed by the joint efforts of the two Tamil powers. This was the last great achievement of the Cholas. During the first half of the thirteenth century the Pandyas invaded the Chola kingdom. The Hoysalas and the Kakatiyas also took advantage of its weakness, to deprive it of its western and northern districts. The power of the former extended as far south as Trichinopoly, and the Kakatiya chief captured Conjeevaram. The simultaneous



Gold Coin of Vishnuvardhana or Bittideva.



A Pandya Coin.

disappearance of the Chalukya dynasty in the Dakhan enabled the Hoysalas to extend their power north as far as the Krishna. The last powerful

Sundara Pandya, c. 1290 A.D.

southern ruler was a Pandya king named Sundara (died about A.D. 1293), who conquered the Tamil country and Ceylon. The hand of the Muhammadans, under Malik Kafur, fell, in A.D. 1310, most heavily on the Hoysalas, whose capital Dwarasamudra was sacked, as containing the plunder of South India and the Dakhan. Confusion reigned in the country after the departure of the invaders. This

Ravivarman Kulasekhara, c. 1310 A.D.

is evidenced by the successful raid of a prince of Quilon, named Ravivarman Kulasekhara, who in the year after retirement of the Muhammadans (*i.e.* in A.D. 1311–1312) progressed victoriously through the Pandya and Chola countries, as far north as Conjeevaram. The evil, however, soon

wrought its own cure. About A.D. 1336, two refugees from the Dakhan founded on the banks of the Tungabhadra a new Hindu city, which they named Vijayanagara, and claimed the obedience of South India as the representatives of the Yadavas of Devagiri and the Hoysalas of Mysore. Under them and their successors South India again became united as in the days of Raja Raja or Kulottunga.

Condition of the country under the Cholas.

32. The inscriptions of the period throw much light on the government of the Chola emperors and the condition of their subjects. From these it appears that the Chola sovereign not merely *reigned*, but *ruled*. Whether in camp or in the capital, the affairs of the state received his *personal* attention, and his oral orders were recorded by secretaries, and communicated to the provincial governors. The kingdom was divided into districts, several districts being grouped together to form a province (*Mandala*). Each province represented an old kingdom, and its viceroy was either a descendant of its dispossessed royal house or was a relation of the emperor. A great body of officials conducted the administration of the province under the orders of the viceroy. Considerable attention was paid to the upkeep of records.

The government.

Revenue and expenditure.

33. The chief sources of the State's income was the tax on land, which was usually one-sixth of the gross produce. The State also levied a host of other imposts, such as profession dues, duties on commerce, tools, the salt tax, water-cesses, and fines. Much attention was paid to the collection of the land revenue. For this purpose the country was thoroughly surveyed. Two such surveys are on record—one of which took place before the accession of Raja Raja (*i.e.* A.D. 985), and the other in A.D. 1086,[1] during the reign of

Surveys.

[1] This is also the year of the great Domesday survey in England.



KAITESWARA TEMPLE AT HALEBID.

(*From Fergusson's "History of Indian and Eastern Architecture." John Murray.*)

Kulottunga I. The village was assessed as a whole for the land-tax. In seasons of scarcity remissions of taxes were *claimed*, but were not always *granted* by the king. The right of cultivating the lands of defaulters of revenue was sold by the village assemblies to realize the arrears payable to the State. Large sums were spent by the government in making and maintaining roads and irrigation works (channels, bridges, and dams). The Cholas maintained a standing army as well as a navy. Civil functionaries were paid either in cash or by assignments of lands or the land-revenue. Taxes were paid in gold or in kind.[1] Tolls were considered a great hardship, and Kulottunga I. won much popularity by wisely sanctioning their abolition throughout his empire.

Public works.

Army and navy.

Tolls.

34. The most remarkable feature of the administration of the time was, however, the self-government of villages, which appears to have been general throughout South India from the tenth century A.D. Each village was a self-governing unit and had its *general assembly*, which annually elected the executive body of the village, known as "the great men of the village." Besides these, there were several working *committees* for looking after the various branches of village administration. Precise rules governed the election of members to the various bodies of the village. The taxes were collected in the name of the village assembly, the village servants worked under the direction of the committees, and charitable endowments were made and also received as trusts on behalf of the village by "the great men of the village." Records were kept of their collections and work, and these were open to the inspection of the divisional officers of the

Village self-government.

[1] Silver seems to have been rare, and is not usually mentioned in donations.

kingdom (*adhikari*) and the district commanders of the forces (*Senapati*). Criminal justice was also administered by the village assembly, acting with or independently of the divisional officer.

General conditions.

35. The country, on the whole, seems to have been prosperous, and this was in a large measure due to the power of rulers like Raja Raja and Kulottunga, in whose days the country was free from invasion. These kings accumulated vast spoils during their wars, and spent them lavishly in embellishing their capitals, constructing and endowing great temples, and patronizing men of letters.

Religion.

The earlier Chola emperors were Hindus, worshipping Siva, but tolerantly endowing temples of other sects and religions. A persecuting spirit, however, set in after the death of Kulottunga I., and Jains and the followers of Ramanuja, the Vishnuite reformer (died 1132 A.D.) were persecuted. But the evil lasted only for a short time, and the sect of Ramanuja, who revived the worship of Vishnu, made great progress through the patronage of the Hoysala Bittideva (Vishnuvardhana), who was a follower of Ramanuja, and some of his descendants, as well as some of the rulers of Madura and the west coast. Princes and private individuals vied with one another in raising numerous temples to Hindu deities, and the period was characterized by considerable architectural activity throughout South India.

Ramanuja.

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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

B.C.

c. 650. Coinage introduced into India.
Religious ferment in Hindustan.

c. 600. The Sisunaga dynasty comes into power in Magadha.

c. 599–527. Vardhamana Mahavira, the "founder" of Jainism.

c. 560–480. The Buddha (Gautama Siddhartha).

558–529. Cyrus founds the Persian Empire.

c. 525. K. Bimbisara (Magadha).
K. Prasenajit (Kosala).

521–485. Darius the Great, King of Persia.

516. Voyage of Skylax of Caryanda.

c. 500. Ajatasatru K. of Magadha.
Probable date of the composition of Gautama's Dharmasutra (Code).

485–465. Xerxes, King of Persia.

c. 480. Persian invasion of Greece. Indian troops probably share in the invasion. Death of the Buddha. Alleged *first* Buddhist Council (at Rajagriha).
Stupa at Piprawa (on the Nepalese frontier) raised over the ashes of the Buddha—earliest known Indian building (not of wood).

c. 479. The Sakya clan destroyed.

c. 400. Apastamba's Dharma-Sutra (Code) composed for the guidance of the Aryan settlers in the Dakhan.

c. 380. "Second" Buddhist Council (at Vaisali).
The Sisunaga dynasty displaced by the Nandas in Magadha.
Ctesias writes an account of India.

c. 350. Probable date of the great Sanskrit grammarian *Panini*.

c. 330. The Persian empire conquered by Alexander the Great.

327 (May)–325 (October). Alexander in India.

326 (July). Battle of the Jhelum (Hydaspes).

c. 325. Coins of Saubhuti (Sophytes), K. of the Salt Range, imitating Greek types.

323 (June). Death of Alexander at Babylon.

c. 322. Revolt in India.
Overthrow of the Nanda dynasty in Magadha. Accession of Chandragupta Maurya.

B.C.

c. 315. Alleged Jain immigration into South India in consequence of a famine in Hindustan.

312. Seleucus Nicator recovers Babylon. His era.

305–303. War between Seleucus and Chandragupta. Extension of the Indian empire to the Hindu Kush.

302. Megasthenes at Pataliputra.

c. 300. Probable date of the *Artha-sutra* of Chanakya. Coins with inscriptions come into use in India.

c. 298. Death of Chandragupta (Maurya).

c. 273. Accession of Asoka.

269. Coronation (*Abhisheka*) of Asoka.

261. The Kalinga war.

c. 260–259. Asoka becomes a Buddhist.

c. 258. Asoka becomes a Buddhist *Monk*.

c. 257–256. He begins the publication of his edicts.

c. 250. Revolt of Bactria and Parthia against the Seleucids. Probable date of the Buddhist Stupas at Bhattiprolu and Gudivada (Krishna district). Railings of *Mahabodhi* (Buddha-Gaya) and Sanchi. Asoka's monoliths.

c. 250–150. Bactrian coinage in imitation of Greek types. Several of the *Sanchi* topes erected.

250–50. *Early period* of Buddhist Art.

c. 240. "Third" Buddhist Council (at Pataliputra).

c. 232. Death of Asoka.

c. 220. The Andhras in power in the Dakhan.

206. Antiochus the Great invades India.

c. 200. Upward limit assigned (by Bühler) to the present recension of Manu's (metrical) code.

c. 200–150. Railings of the Stupa at Bharhut (Central India).

c. 185. Extinction of the Mauryan dynasty. Accession of Pushyamitra Sunga. Brahman reaction.

c. 170. The Yue-chi horde expelled from China.

168. Kharavela, the Jain King of Kalinga.

c. 160. The Yue-chis expel the Sakas from Central Asia and drive them southward.

c. 155. Menander. *Gateways* at Sanchi. Restoration of the Buddhist Stupa at Amaravati (Krishna district).

c. 140–125. The Sakas occupy Seistan, etc. Northern Satraps (of Takshasila and Mathura).

c. 140. The Sanskrit grammarian Patanjali.

c. 70. Accession of the Kanva dynasty. Alleged immigration of Jews into Malabar.

c. 65. Syria becomes a Roman province. Formation of the five Yue-chi principalities.

B.C.

57. Initial year of the Malava or Vikrama era.

c. 27. Extinction of the Kanva dynasty. An Indian embassy received at Rome.

A.D.

14. Death of the Roman Emperor Augustus.

40. Gondophares. Thomas the Apostle. Kadphises I. (Kusana).

50–200. Kusan coinage (traces of Roman influence).

50-350. Second Period of Indian plastic art. Gandhara and Amaravati Schools of Sculpture.

c. 85. Kadphises II.
Rise of the Digambara sect of the Jains.

c. 100. Destruction of the Indo-Parthian power in N.W. India by the Kusanas under Kadphises II. Ancient Tamil classics (the Kural, the Silappadhikaram) composed.

116. Roman conquest of Mesopotamia.

c. 125–153. Kanishka. "Fourth" Buddist Council. Mahayana Buddhism.

c. 130. Nasik Buddhist caves.

c. 150. The Western Satrap Rudradaman.
Aswaghosha. Dhanvantari. Earliest paintings at Ajanta.
Sivaskandavarman (Pallava) celebrates a horse-sacrifice in South India.

200. Lowest limit assigned to the present recension of the Code of Manu (Macdonnell).

c. 226. Collapse of the Kusana, Andhra, and Parthian empires.

300. Beginning of the decline of Indian sculpture, reckoned as Art.

318–9. Initial year of the Gupta era.

c. 326–375. Samudragupta.

c. 375. Probable date of Kalidasa and of the legist Yagnavalkya.

375–413. Chandragupta II. (*Vikramaditya*).

c. 395. The Satraps of the West overthrown by the Guptas.

c. 300-400. Vigorous Brahmanic revival and renovation. Suppression of the Prakrits by Sanskrit. Decline of Buddhism. Modifications in Brahmanism. Sanskrit ornate poetry, revision of the Puranas and the great epics, and works on sacrificial law and ritual, philosophy, astronomy, and civil law. Decay of Indian art.

405–411. Fa-Hian in India.

c. 425–480. Corruption of the Gupta coinage.

450-650. *Raths* at Mamallapura (Seven Pagodas).

455. First Hun War.

470–480. Second Hun War.

476. Aryabhata (the astronomer) born.

490-510. Toramana.

A.D.

c. 500. Amarasimha (the lexicographer).

510-540. Mihiragula in Hindustan and Kashmir.

528. Mihiragula defeated by Narasimhagupta and Yasodharman.

563-567. The Turks destroy the Huns on the Amu Darya.

c. 578. Early Chalukyas at Vatapi (Badami).
Badami Brahmanical caves excavated.

c. 580. Subandhu (romancer) and Varahamihira (astronomer).

c. 600. Kingdom of Srikantha founded.
Bana (Sanskrit author).
Saiva revival in South India.
Composition of the Tevaram hymns.

606-648. Harsha.

608-c. 642. Pulakesin II. (W. Chalukya).

629. Harsha's religious convocation at Prayaga (Allahabad).

629-645. Travels of Hiouen Thsang.

c. 670. Later Gupta dynasty. Rise of the Rajput dynasties.

c. 700. Kumarila Bhatta (Mimamsaka).

711. Arab conquest of Sindh.

c. 730. Bhavabhuti (poet) patronized by Lalitaditya of Kashmir.

750. End of the Arab domination in Sindh.

760. Kailasa (at Ellura) carved.
Sack of Valabhi by the Arabs.

c. 800. Sankaracharya.
The poets Magha and Visakhadatta.

900-1200. Chandella architectural activity at Khajurabo (Bandelkhand).

915. South India conquered by the Rashtrakuta, Krishna III.

941. The Kanarese poet Pampa.

950-1250. Period of "Chalukyan" architectural activity in the Dakhan and the Karnatik.
"Dravidian" style temples constructed in large numbers in South India.

985-1017. Raja Raja Chola.

c. 1000. The great temple at Tanjore built.

c. 1010-1050. Bhoja (Parmar), King, author and patron of letters.

1022. Lahore captured by the Muhammadans.

1032. Jain temple (of marble) at Mt. Abu, erected by a merchant named Vimala Sah.

c. 1060. Kirtivarman (Chandella). Karna of Chedi. Accession of the Sena dynasty in Bengal.

1070-1118. Kulottunga Chola.
Tamil literary activity.

1076-1116. Vikramaditya VI.

1086. Great Revenue Survey of South India.

c. 1090. Vignaneswara (legist).

A.D.

c. 1100. Ramanuja (Vaishnava reformer).
Jayadeva (poet).

1100–1141. Vishnuvardhana (Bittideva), Hoysala ruler.

1118. Traditional date of the birth of Ananta-tirtha, the Madhwa reformer.

c. 1120. Belur temple.

c. 1141. Hoysaleswara temple at Halebid commenced.

1149. Kalhana completes his chronicle of Kashmir (Rajatarangini).

1170–1193. Jayachchandra (Kanauj) and Prithviraja. Chand, the Hindi poet (?).

1191 and 1193. Battles of Tirauri.

1200–1300. Decay of the Chola and Chalukya powers.
Rise of the Yadavas (Devagiri) and the Kakatiyas (Warangal).

c. 1220. Kaitabheswara temple at Halebid.

c. 1260. Nannul, the famous Tamil grammar, composed.

c. 1268. Venkatanatha (Vedanta-desika), the Vaishnava reformer and writer of South India.

c. 1270. The Marathi poets, Jnaneswar and Namdev.

1309–1310. Malik Kafur's invasion of South India.

c. 1336. The city of Vijayanagara founded.

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The references are to the Chapters and Paragraphs.

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